

WARE RIVER NEWS

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MEET THE CANDIDATES *Forum*



Three candidates are seeking election to two seats on the Ware Selectboard, candidates are shown from left, Steven Hawk, Nancy Talbot and Valerie Granger. *Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette*

SB candidates answered questions

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer

★★★★★

TOWN ELECTION

Monday, April 13
Town Hall,
126 Main St., Ware
7 a.m.-8 p.m.

★★★★★

healthcare, town infrastructure, and the town pool.

Introductions

The forum began with

introductions from the candidates, starting with Hawk. He talked about how he has always been a part of the community, and wants to work for fair representation on the Selectboard.

Talbot highlighted her experience on the Selectboard, School Committee, Recreation Committee, Housing Authority, and her knowledge of grants.

Granger spoke about her experience on many boards

in the town, including the Community Development Authority and Housing Authority.

Healthcare

The candidates were asked what steps they would take to bring additional healthcare to Ware.

Talbot started by highlighting that the closure of the Mary Lane Hospital

Please see **CANDIDATES**, page 6

Select Board, FinCom discuss general government budgets

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
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HARDWICK – Another joint meeting between the Select Board and the Finance Committee was held on March 30.

This meeting was to review the General Government section of the fiscal year 2027 budget. Mark Korzec of the Finance Committee said there have been some updated numbers provided by the Town Administrator and gives a better understanding of what is and isn't known in general government.

Both boards are still waiting on some numbers including numbers from the Hardwick-New Braintree Police Department. They're also waiting on the numbers from the agreement with the Senior Center. A meeting later in the week will go over that agreement.

They agreed to not go over it during this joint meeting, but both Finance Committee and the Select Board members feel it is good to be aware that the school budget is one of the

big budget items.

Town Administrator Justine Caggiano mentioned some items have changed from the last joint meeting. The biggest goal now is to itemize the debt, even though some numbers are still being figured out.

The Town Administrator provided copies for both boards to review with several items highlighted.

The review of general government began with going over the Planning Board and its revolving account. The salary increase was negotiated to \$1,000 and the board also put in for a \$200 expense increase.

Planning Board Chair William Cole attended the joint meeting and addressed the reason for the increase. The Planning Board anticipates more training conferences and Cole also mentioned they will be using more supplies.

Both the Select Board and the Finance Committee wanted to know what funds go into the Planning Board's revolving account.

Please see **BUDGET**, page 13

Selectmen OK'd common victualler license for restaurant

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Board of Selectmen reviewed a request for a common victualler license for Arista Restaurant LLC.

Restaurant co-owner Brent Gurel said business has been going good and said "the town has been very supportive" of them at the March 26 meeting. Vice-Chair David Dufresne said he has heard a lot of good things about the restaurant.

The Board welcomed Gurel and Arista Restaurant to town and approved the request for a common victualler license.

Police Chief request

The board discussed

a request by Police Chief Gerald Millette to sign a memorandum of agreement for a municipal speed feedback signage state grant. The board approved this request.

Floodplain Zoning Bylaw amendment

The Selectmen had a discussion regarding a request from the Planning Board to amend the Floodplain Zoning Bylaw (Town of Warren Zoning Bylaws, Section 10, Flood Plain District). Selectmen Chair Richard Eichacker, who is also the chair of the Planning Board, said this bylaw needs to be updated due to a few people in town who have flood insurance.

The Selectmen voted to refer the Floodplain Zoning Bylaw to the Planning

Board to amend.

Contracts

The board approved to professional services contract between the town and Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission for the administration of the town's fiscal year 2025 Community Development Block Grant program. The board also approved a proposed contract amendment between the town and Waterfield Design Group for the River & Central Street Improvement Project.

Medical insurance renewal

The Selectmen discussed fiscal year 2027 employee

Please see **WARREN BOS**, page 7



SOLD-OUT Supper benefited town's community garden

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
pouimette@turley.com

WARE – The Ware Grange #164 hosted a sold-out crowd at a supper held at the Ware Senior Center

Monday night to benefit the Ware Community Garden, an effort led by those seeking to improve food access in town.

The meal of chicken marsala was prepared by Ware Senior Center Chef Alton Davis and his wife Nikki, and

raffle prizes were generously donated by local businesses. The meals were served by members of the Ware Jr./Sr. High School's National

Please see **GARDEN**, page 15



The 113th anniversary of the dedication of the Gilbertville Public Library was held this past Sunday afternoon. *Turley Photo by Paula Ouimette*

Library's dedication celebrated 113 years later

By Paula Ouimette
Editor
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HARDWICK – Every room in the Gilbertville Public Library was filled with the sounds of conversation and music this past Sunday afternoon, as a large crowd gathered to celebrate the anniversary of the library's dedication 113 years earlier.

March 29 was once again a pivotal date for the vil-

lage's library, as it faces an uncertain future now that its endowment has run out.

This is a common theme across the commonwealth for many rural libraries, Vicky Biancolo said. Biancolo is the chair of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Biancolo said it was good to see how invested the community members were in keeping their library open, and she spoke about the critical role public libraries play

in promoting literacy, especially for youth.

"I really am so impressed with the support that I'm seeing," she said. "I really hope that this is the beginning of the rebirth of this library."

Interim Library Director Laura Grunberg and Library Assistant Colleen Coran greeted guests at the library, and encouraged them to explore the revitalized building.

Donations, volunteer

efforts and creative talents have breathed new life into the rooms of the library, with the children's room featuring an inviting crushed velvet couch, decorated with pillows. This couch once belonged to children's author Ed Tse-chun Young, and it

Please see **LIBRARY**, page 13





Submitted Photo

Mary Harper from New Braintree State Police Academy and Missy Pariseau store manager from Leicester Walmart are shown doing volunteer community service for the Ware Senior Center by filling 120 Easter eggs.

'Hop' into the Ware Senior Center

WARE – Spring is hopping into the Ware Senior Center, 1 Robbins Road, and there are some exciting Easter-themed events coming up.

On Thursday, April 2, people can make butter lambs with Brian Socha. On Tuesday, April 7, the Ware Senior Center will host a combined birthday/Easter party.

Volunteers Mary Harper from the State Police Academy in New Braintree

and Missy Pariseau, store manager of the Leicester Walmart, recently filled 120 Easter eggs for the celebration.

On Friday, April 17, there will be a presentation on fall prevention by New England Orthopedic at noon.

A ladies tea party will be held at the Ware Senior Center on Monday, April 27 at 2 p.m. Ladies can wear their wide brim, hats, or whatever they have. They

will be a door price for the best hat and everyone will go home with a goodie bag.

Make sure to stop by the Thrift Store to take advantage of great deals with the Brown Bag Sale, which will run until April 17. A brown bag will be provided to shoppers to fill with winter clothing for only \$10.

The Thrift Store is open to the public, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m.-noon.

Ware Senior Center NEWS

WARE – The Ware Senior Center, 413-967-9645, located at 1 Robbins Road, is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

The thrift store is open each of those days from 9 a.m.-noon. Donations to the store are only accepted by Sue LaBarge, who can be reached by calling 413-544-1574.

ACTIVITIES

Thursday, April 2

- 9 a.m. Exercise at Valley View Housing
- 9 a.m. Walking Club (weather permitting)
- 9:30 a.m. Line Dancing for Beginners
- 10 a.m. Line Dancing
- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 12:15 p.m. Art Class
- Friday, April 3
- 9 a.m. Tai Chi

- 10 a.m. Scat
- 11:30 a.m. Lunch
- 1 p.m. Chair Yoga with Lori
- 6 p.m. Pitch (Doors open at 5 p.m.)

LUNCHES DINE IN 11:30 a.m.

All meals \$3.50 unless otherwise noted

Required: call 413-967-4595 by noon on the business day before, to put you name on the lunch list.

Thursday, April 2

Chicken Quesadilla, Spanish Rice, Tossed Salad, Dessert of the Day

Friday, April 3

Good Friday
Baked Fish, Rice, Veggie of the Day, Dessert of the Day

Annual census forms to be mailed to residents

WARE – The Annual Census forms will be mailed later this week, please take the time to review, make changes if needed; sign and date and return to the Town Clerk by mail.

A Blue Drop Box outside the Town Hall offices is available for your use it is not necessary to return them inside.

Remember you cannot register to vote on a census form, you cannot change your party affiliation or your address if you have moved. You must register either in person or online at www.mass.gov

Are You Old News?



Each week the Ware River News digs into its submitted photo archives and selects a people photo to publish. We need your help to help identify those pictured.



File Photo
Last week's photo from 2023 showed Adaline Guzik enjoying a music program at the Ware Library.

If you recognize the folks in this week's photo, please send their names and your full name to pouimette@turley.com.

Town Clerk lists Vote by Mail information

WARE – The Town of Ware will hold its Annual Town Election on Monday, April 13, at Town Hall, 126 Main St.

While voters may cast their ballots in person on election day, there is also a Vote by Mail option for those who may be interested.

The Vote by Mail application is available in the Town Clerk's Office to be completed in person, or it is also available online on the Town of Ware website, www.townofware.com. See Town Clerk page – Elections and Voting, or

News and Notices.

Applications may be dropped off in person at the Town Clerk's Office, in the U.S. Mail or in the blue drop box outside the lower-level offices at Town Hall, 126 Main St.

An online portal is also available under www.ma.gov – Secretary of State – Elections and Voting.

The deadline to apply for or forward your application is Monday April 6 at 5 p.m.

Questions may be directed to the Town Clerk – Nancy J. Talbot at 413-967-9648 extension 103.

Open House at St. Aloysius school is April 6

HARDWICK – St. Aloysius Catholic School is hosting an Open House on Monday, April 6, from 3-5 p.m.

Prospective families are encouraged to visit the school, located at 52 Church St. in Gilbertville, where they can tour the classrooms, meet the teachers and learn more about the rich, faith-filled educational experiences that await.

For more information, please call the school and speak to Roberta McQuaid, Enrollment Coordinator, at 413-477-1268. Or apply online at <https://www.staloy-siuscs.com/join-our-family/application/>.

Paige Memorial Library lists April events

HARDWICK – April is Poetry Month and on Tuesday, April 7, at 6 p.m., a Haiku Workshop for all ages will be held at the Paige Memorial Library, 87 Petersham Road.

Come learn and have fun writing haiku poetry. This drop-in workshop is open to all ages, drop-in. There will be a Poetry Slam coming on April 28.

On Saturday, April 11 at 10:30 a.m., join Ellie Shea, Youth Education Coordinator from the East Quabbin Land Trust for a quick lesson on birding for young learners and the creation of a classic pine cone bird feeder craft using sunflower seed butter rather than peanut butter. Please bring binoculars if you have them as participants will spend some time outside birding.

This program is best suited for ages 8 to 12, younger

kids are welcome but will likely require hands-on help from parents.

Wednesday, April 15, is an early-release day for the Quabbin Regional School District. Drop-in at the library from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. All ages are welcome to enjoy and explore an art activity.

On Tuesday, April 21 at 6 p.m., James DaRosa and Lindsay Aucoin of the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation and Business Assistance Corporation will present a workshop designed to be practical, empowering, and immediately useful for small business owners at any stage. They will address business loans and readiness, how to start a business, how to write a business plan, and access to computer program training.

For more information, contact the library at 413-

477-6704 or paigelibrary.hardwick@gmail.com or the QVDCD at 413-497-4405.

Ongoing activities

Every Wednesday Story Time with an activity will be held from 10:30 a.m.-noon. This is a fun time for the youngest patrons to experience the library and a nice place to make friends.

Other ongoing library activities include the Paige Book Club, the Cookbook Club, Celebrate Hardwick, the Ongoing Book Sale, the Paige Writers, Paige's Page to Screen book to movie discussion group, and the Movie Festival Committee. Come join a group or suggest a new one.

More events are coming soon. Check out the library's Facebook page and website at www.facebook.com/paigelibrary or www.paigelibrary.com.

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Hadley Public Schools grades PK-12 is now accepting School Choice Applications.

They can be found at www.hadleyschools.org.

The cut-off date for applications is April 15th.

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- Internships, Service Learning
- Travel Opportunities

Grades 7-12 open.

Town Clerk shared Annual Town Election information

HARDWICK – Town Clerk Ryan J. Witkos announced there will be two contested races on the ballot at Hardwick's Annual Town Election on Saturday, May 2.

Polling hours will be from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at the Hardwick Elementary School, 76 School House Drive.

Elizabeth V. Cyran of Hardwick Pond Road, and Zachary E. Spencer of Barre Road will face off for a three-year term on the Select Board. The incumbent, Eric Vollheim is not seeking re-election.

Heidi Johnson of Lyman Road, and Lisa J. Nash of Charity Hill Road, will face off for a three-year term on the Board of Health. The incumbent, Paul Mailhot is not seeking re-election.

Those running unopposed are as follows: Ryan J. Witkos*, Town Clerk, three years; Jennifer S. Kolenda*, Assessor, three years; Colin R. Brown, K-12 Quabbin Regional School Committee Member, three years; Lisa Gaskill*, Barry P. Koch, Paige Memorial Library Trustee (two positions); Paige Agricultural Fund Trustee, Stanley D. White*, five years; Ryan J. Witkos*, Moderator, three years; Harry T. Comerford*, Jennifer E. Garvey*, Planning Board (two positions.) *denotes incumbent.

The last day to register to vote for the Annual Town Election is 5 p.m., Wednesday, April 22.

The vote by mail application deadline is Monday, April 27 at 5 p.m. Those voters qualified to vote absentee should contact the Town Clerk's office.

Voter registration will be held at the Myron E. Richardson Building, 307 Main St. on Wednesday, April 22 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Knights of Columbus held annual Easter egg hunt

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARE – The Knights of Columbus Ware Council 183 hosted its annual Easter Egg Hunt this past Sunday.

The Knights of Columbus have put on this fun event around Easter for many years. The egg hunt took place on the field behind the St. Mary's Rectory and old Catholic school where a field of colorful Easter eggs were found.

There were well over 1,000 eggs on the field waiting to be collected by children of all ages. Brian Rheaume of the Knights of Columbus was joined by the Easter Bunny greeting all the children and their families, who were eager to start the egg hunt.

Rheaume said there were around 60 kids who participated in this year's Easter egg hunt, which is a considerable increase from previous years.

"The number of kids has increased for this," Rheaume said, who had some of his children participating in the egg hunt this year.

The kids were able to gather eggs based on their



Children of all ages lined up with their baskets to begin collecting Easter eggs.

Turley Photos by Ryan Drago

age groups, and then families were able to take photos with the Easter Bunny.

After turning in the Easter eggs they had collected, the kids received gifts and treats to bring home, provided by the Ware Knights of Columbus.

This annual Easter egg hunt is made possible thanks to the collaboration between the Knights of Columbus Ware Council 183, St. Mary's Catholic Church, and All Saints.

A total of 15 Ware Knights of Columbus mem-

bers helped set up this year's egg hunt along with family members helping as well. The field not only included colorful easter eggs, but a

selection of Easter themed decorations.

The kids had fun and didn't leave a single Easter egg on the field.



The Easter Bunny is shown alongside members of the Harris family, Brush family, Harper family, and Roxo family during the annual Easter egg hunt presented by the Knights of Columbus Ware Council 183.



Alex Guimond (left), Jackson Imbier, and Leo Imbier are shown with the Easter Bunny. The kids held the gifts they got during the Easter egg hunt.

Candidates announced for Annual Town Election

WARE – The Annual Town Election will be held on Monday, April 13.

Offices which will appear on the ballot are: Selectboard, three-year term, (vote for two), Nancy J. Talbot, Valerie E. Granger and Steven M. Hawk; School Committee, three-year term, Kevin Paul Slattery; Board of Assessors, three-year term, James E. Niquette;

Board of Assessors, one year unexpired term, Michael Joseph Vadnais; Board of Health, three-year term, Michael Francis Juda; Park Commissioner, three-year term, William Randolph Imbier; Cemetery Commissioner, three-year term, no candidates; Planning Board, five-year term, Richard Albert Starodaj; Ware Housing Authority,

five-year term, no candidates.

The last date to register to vote is Friday, April 3.

The last date for file an application for Vote by Mail (five business days prior to the Annual Town Election) is Monday, April 6 by 5 p.m.

Questions may be directed to the Town Clerk, Nancy J. Talbot, at 413-967-9648 extension 103.

Open burning permits available online only

Season runs now through April 30

WARE – Open burning season is open now through April 30, during the hours of 10 a.m.-4 p.m.

Permits will be available online only at ware.firepermits.com. In order to obtain

a burning permit, please go to ware.firepermits.com and register for the site.

If you are already registered for the site from last year's season, you only need to log in and apply for a 2026 burn permit.

Please make sure you link your bank account for UniPay for a smoother pro-

cess. The bank requires time to process your payment and your permit will be inactive until payment is approved.

Cash will not be accepted at the fire station for a burn permit. All processing fees are required through the online website.

Glenda's
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USDA INSP. FRESH PORK HAM (LEG).....	\$1.89 ea	USDA INSP. FROZEN PREMIUM CLEANED PORK CHITTERING 5 LB BAG.....	\$8.99 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN WHOLE TURKEY.....	\$1.33 lb
USDA INSP. FROZEN HAM PORTIONS BUTT or SHANK.....	\$1.09 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH AMERICAN LEG OF LAMB	\$6.67 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN KING FISH STEAKS W/ HEAD OR TAIL.....	\$5.99 lb
USDA INSP. KAYEM BUDABALL WHOLE BONELESS PIT HAM.....	\$3.69 lb	USDA INSP. CHICOPEE PROVISIONS BLUE SEAL KIELBASA FOR EASTER	\$5.55 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN CONCH MEAT CLEANED 5 LB BOX.....	\$5.99 ea
USDA INSP. MCKENZIES 1/2 SPIRAL HAM W/GLAZE PAK.....	\$1.39 lb	USDA INSP. FRESH HOLIDAY PORK ROAST STUFFED W/ HAM, CHEESE, PEPPERS, BACON, OLIVES	\$4.49 lb	USDA INSP. FROZEN SKINLESS SKINLESS HADDOCK FILLETS 2 LB BOX.....	\$9.99 ea
USDA INSP. SKINLESS & SHANKLESS KAYEM OLD TIME WHOLE HAM HARDWOOD SMOKED.....	\$1.99 lb	USDA INSP. IQF FROZEN COOKED SHRIMP 21/25 COUNT 2 LB BAG.....	\$16.99 ea	Happy Easter	

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viewpoints

SOCIAL SECURITY

Matters

By Russell Gloor

I'll be 70 on New Year's Day. When should I apply for Social Security?

Dear Rusty:

I was born on Jan. 1, 1958, so I believe Social Security considers me to be 70 as of December 2027. I'm planning on filing when I turn 70 to maximize the payment. I'm not sure if I should start in December, with the first payment in January 2028. Or should I start in January with the first payment in February 2028? I know I can start anytime, however I don't want to file before the maximum payment, even by one month.

Signed: Wanting Maximum Benefit

Dear Wanting:

You are correct that if your birth date is Jan. 1, 1958, you are entitled to your full age 70 benefit in December 2027. So, if you claim your SS benefit to start in December 2027 you will get your maximum benefit amount and you will receive that payment in January 2028 (on the second Wednesday). Basically, anyone born on the first of any month is considered to have been born in the previous month for SS benefit purposes.

You can apply for your benefits up to four months prior to your birthday month and SS usually suggests applying about three months in advance to give them time to process your application. When you complete the application, you will specify the month you wish your benefits to start, so applying early does not present a problem. You can either call SSA at 1-800-772-1213 to make an appointment

to apply over the phone or you can apply online at www.ssa.gov/apply.

The one thing you might want to do is put the following in the "Remarks" section of your application for SS benefits: "I do not wish to receive any retroactive Social Security benefits. I want my benefits to become effective with the first month of my age 70 eligibility (December 2027 because I was born on the first of January)."

Including that remark will ensure that your benefit will be the full maximum amount you are entitled to at 70 years of age, without any reduction. And I congratulate you on choosing a strategy which maximizes your monthly benefit and will likely provide you with the most in cumulative lifetime Social Security benefits.

The Association Mature Citizens Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. This article is intended for information purposes and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the Association Mature Citizens Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. To submit a question, visit amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

Pruning your hydrangeas

It was encouraging to see so many gardeners out in force this past weekend, regardless of the fact that it remained a little chilly.

I got outside too, mainly to clean up some leaves and debris from a bed near the front door. While I was there, I began pruning my pink flowered Hydrangea (*H. paniculata*), mainly by removing last year's blooms.

I often get questions about blue hydrangeas and how to prune and what to do to coax it into bloom. So, before you get the pruners out and have at it, read on.

Most established hydrangea bushes, the "Mophead" types (*Hydrangea macrophylla*) say those older than 15 years or so, flower on "old" wood, in other words, from buds made on the previous season's stems. That is why they are not pruned in the fall or in the spring for that matter, unless the stem is dead or partially dead.

An early autumn frost, a hard winter, or a late spring frost can kill buds or even entire stems. If the stem does not leaf out at all the further we get into spring, it is likely dead, and you should cut it

down to the ground. Usually the plant's roots

cut away. Sometimes a stem is only partially winter killed and it may leaf out midway down the stem.

In that case, just prune away the portion that is dead and leave the rest. Don't worry that you may remove flower buds in the process; more occur further down the stem and will bloom if they too haven't been eliminated by Old Man Winter.

Perhaps you have one of the newer cultivars such as "Endless Summer," "Penny Mac," or others that bloom on new growth as well as old growth. In that case how much you cut away is not as critical. You should get flowers even if last season's stems are cut to the ground because soon enough new stems will produce new buds.

Sometimes people complain that they still don't get flowers and this is very perplexing. I've been to forums where everything from proper siting (morning sun, dappled shade) to fertilization is discussed (not too high in nitrogen, please).

One complaint was that our growing season is just

Please see **GARDEN**, page 5

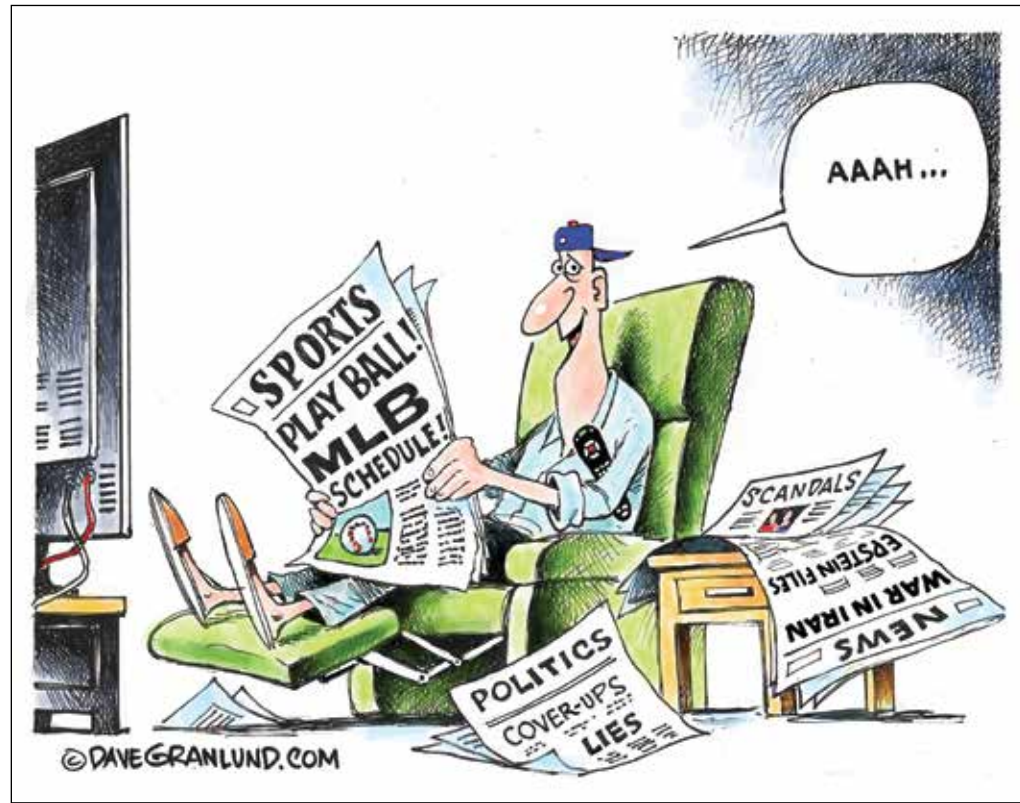
in the Garden

by Roberta McQuaid



are not harmed, and new growth will emerge from the base of the plant.

However, with these older cultivars, you will be left with just foliage in summer because the buds made the previous year will have been



Smoking cessation is beneficial at any age

If there's one habit every doctor wishes you would break, it's smoking. Quitting significantly improves health and reduces the risk of diseases.

And this is true no matter what age you are, from your 20s right into your 70s. While some older adults may believe it's "too late" to change, evidence shows that about one-third of older adults who attend specialized clinics successfully quit and stay off cigarettes for at least a year.

Research has also found that even 75-year-olds who are able to stop cigarettes gain an average of one year of life expectancy. That's one more year to do some of the things you enjoy, like visiting with grandchildren (and not being relegated to the patio to light up).

Besides life expectancy, other benefits for older quitters are

A lower risk of disease: Older adults who quit have lower rates of death from heart attacks, strokes and cancer compared to those who continue to smoke.

Reduced frailty: Stopping smoking is associated with a lower degree of "frailty" (a measure of increased vulnerability and weakness) over time,



By Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, RN
Guest Column



promoting healthier aging and better physical function.

Cognitive and sexual health: Quitting smoking can lead to improved brain function and has been shown to improve long-term sexual function recovery following procedures like prostate surgery.

Surgical success: For older adults facing surgery, quitting at least eight weeks prior can significantly decrease the risk of lung-related complications. If you can go eight weeks, you can keep going.

Quitting cigarettes is really, really hard because of the addictive properties of nicotine, which has been shown to boost dopamine in the reward circuits of the brain, but causes cravings and withdrawal symptoms when it's stopped. This is true whether your source of nicotine is a cigarette or a vape.

Most adults who smoke

say they want to quit. A 2022 survey found that more than half of adult smokers tried to quit in the previous year. If you fall into that group, don't go it alone, especially if smoking is a decades-long ingrained habit. Chances of success improve with support from doctors and family.

Support for smoking cessation is everywhere you look. The National Cancer Institute hosts a website, smokefree.gov, which is chock full of tips and techniques to help you on your journey to becoming a former smoker.

For example, there's guidance on nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), which has been shown to increase the success rate, especially when several forms are used, such as a nicotine patch supplemented by lozenges or gum. Some studies suggest that older adults may actually have higher success rates using NRT compared to younger smokers.

You can also find apps, texting and social media sites that offer support, along with how to build a quit plan.

Medicare wants you to quit smoking, too. After all,

it will save them money. Medicare covers counseling sessions to help you stop smoking under Part B, allowing up to eight sessions every 12 months at no cost if your provider accepts Medicare. Additionally, Medicare Part D covers certain prescription medications to assist with smoking cessation.

Medicare Advantage Plans are required to cover counseling and some medications as well, though benefits vary by plan.

Here in Massachusetts, 1-800-QUIT-NOW is Massachusetts' tobacco and nicotine Quitline, where you can connect to a free trained quit coach by phone or line. They share

strategies to curb cravings, handle life's big and small stresses and tackle. You can track your progress and learn how to access free NRT supplies.

Talking to your healthcare provider is also important, both as a source of support and advice on using certain prescription medications to curb smoking such as varenicline (Chantix). This medication can be used by older adults, but caution is advised because of a higher likelihood of age-related kidney issues. Your doctor may also recommend cognitive behavior therapy (CBT).

What does a quit plan look like? Pick a date you're

going to quit and rid the house of cigarettes, ashtrays and other smoking paraphernalia. You might need to take some things to the dry cleaner to get the cigarette smell out. Tell everyone that you've made a quit plan and you need their help.

Be proud of what you're accomplishing! Let people know when you've been smoke-free for a week, a month, a year. If you do happen to light up, don't give up. Tomorrow is another day.

And you may have more tomorrows when you've become an ex-smoker. Good luck!

Teri (Dreher) Frykenberg, R.N., a registered nurse and board-certified patient advocate, is the founder of www.NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com, which trains medical professionals to become successful private patient advocates. A Monson, MA resident, she is the author of "How to Be a Healthcare Advocate for Yourself & Your Loved Ones" and her new book, "Advocating Well: Strategies for Finding Strength and Understanding in Health Care," available at Amazon.com. Contact her at Teri@NurseAdvocateEntrepreneur.com to set up a free phone consultation.

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Letters to the editor should be 250 words or less in length, and "Your Turn" guest column between 500-800 words. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require that the person submitting the opinion also include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous, unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, or defamation of character.

Send opinions to:
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The deadline for submissions is Monday at noon.

Turley Election Policy

This newspaper will print free self-submitted statements of candidacy only four weeks or more out from the election. All candidates running in both contested and uncontested races are asked to submit their statements to the editor to include only biographical and campaign platform details. Total word count for statements is limited to between 300-500 words maximum. Please include a photo. We will not publish any statements of candidacy inside the four weeks from election threshold. To publish any other campaign publicity during the race, please contact our advertising representatives. We also do not allow personal attacks against other candidates or political parties in statements of candidacy, nor do we publish for free any information about key endorsements or political fundraisers.

Letters to the editor of no more than 250 words from supporters endorsing specific candidates or discussing campaign issues are limited to three total per author during the election season. No election letters will appear in the final edition before the election. We reserve the right to edit all statements of candidacy and letters to the editor to meet our guidelines.

Supt. gave budget presentation

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer

WARE – Ware Public School’s interim Superintendent Michael Wood presented a preliminary fiscal year 2027 budget at the School Committee’s meeting on March 25. According to his slideshow presentation, the proposed budget is \$20,280,743, which is a 12%, or \$2 million increase, over last year’s budget. Wood said that 12% increase, only about 4% of it would go towards residents’ taxes.

Wood said the main drivers of this increase are three union contracts, a bargaining group, transportation, and out of district tuition.

Wood said the budget is designed to meet multiple goals, such as improving attendance, engaging parents, high quality instruction materials, and maximizing learning time. He proposed various positions to aid in these goals, which are included – not added – to the budget, such as math interventionists, reading specialists, an engineering teacher, special education teachers/paraprofessionals, and school psychologist.

Other goals presented were getting graduation rates to 100%, and implementing a K-3 literacy program with the help of a grant.

Wood and School Committee member Mel Whitham also spoke on the importance of making school interesting to keep attendance, and make kids want to choose Ware schools, which is why they are researching into the engineering teacher.

Superintendent’s report

In his superintendent report, Wood said the chiller project funding passed at town meeting, and Tighe and Bond are going to be managing it. He said the kick off will be April 1, going over impacts to the school and timelines for completion.

He said the school is eliminating vacancies, and hired an eighth grade math teacher, and a computer teacher. Wood thanked the long term substitute for eighth grade math.

He said the school is recommitting to the protocol of having guests show their identification to the camera before entering the building.

Principal’s report

Ware Junior Senior High School Principal Megan Sears presented a plan for some goals the high school is working on. The first was family and community engagement, and getting more communication, both positive feedback and critical feedback between teachers and parents.

She said they are now updating grades weekly so that parents can always have an up to date grade, so they know how their child is doing in the class.

Sears said they are implementing financial aid nights for rising ninth graders, as well as information sessions for rising seventh graders. She said Savvas has given the school access to their online education platform for free for the next two years, which will support 20-25 students in need of intervention.

Sears said the school has started a senior of the day program, where every senior will get their own day, to drive academic engagement in the lower classes. She said part of this is getting signs that show where the seniors have been accepted for college or military for example.

Sears said she is requesting seventh and eighth graders to not use cell phones at all during classes. She said there are also work based learning, or internships, that students are working on in and outside of the district.

Another goal was to prevent absenteeism, and she said if a student is absent three days in a row they will get a phone call, if they are absent five days in a row there will be a call plus a possible administrator visit, and if they are absent 10 days in a row, families will get an email, they may involve outside agencies, and they may have to un-enroll the student if they are over 16.

If they are under 16, they will hold conferences with counselors, Sears said. Additionally, she said that if students who play sports are not at the school by 8 a.m. they will not be allowed to practice or play that night.

Student Council update

Members of the Ware Junior Senior Student Council gave an update on

Please see **QRSD BUDGET**, page 12

Historical Commission presented with proposed use of Grand Hall

By Zacharias Fragkiadakis
Staff Writer

WARE – The Historical Commission heard a proposal to use the Grand Hall in the Town Hall for a children’s winter recreational program on the weekend.

The proposal was presented by Mary Therese Durr, who also oversees the pickleball program in the hall. Durr acknowledged that this past winter season was not conducive for outdoor activities, and said the program was important because there is not a community center for children in the town.

She said soft gym equipment would be utilized, and she wants to collaborate with town officials to make the program work.

Building Commissioner Anna Marques was also in attendance, and noted that there are special code requirements if there will be a children’s program in the building, including different bathroom designs for a 6 and under program. Durr said she would make the program 6 plus to avoid having to change them.

Marques also said that blocking stage access, and access into the back rooms of the Grand Hall is important, and that prevention does not exist yet. Marques said that in the past, groups that have used the hall have stored things where they should not be, or items that were there have gone miss-

ing. Durr said the upkeep is up to the individual volunteers.

Town Manager Stuart Beckley was in attendance, and said he ultimately makes the decision whether to approve the usage of the room. The discussion is slated to continue at the next meeting.

Grand Hall lighting

Durr said the lights in the Grand Hall create shadows because of a prism in the glass coverings of them. She said an electrician offered to install new lighting and coverings for free, and the only cost to the town would be the materials, which are \$50 a unit.

Commission members said they want to make sure the glass covering the lights is not historic before work is started.

Demolitions

The commission voted to approve the demolition of 14 Pleasant St., which was damaged in a fire. They also discussed a barn at 145 Church St., but had questions about what would be done with the material of the barn after demolition.

They voted to table approval until the next meeting, when they invite the owner of the Church Street property to discuss.

250th celebration

The commission said the 250th celebrations are planned for the week of

July 27 to Aug. 1. Historical Commission activities that are tentatively planned include opening of a time capsule, and a Town Hall tour.

Vice-Chair Wanda Mysona suggested sponsoring a new time capsule at the event as well.

Member Alice Atkinson presented her idea of a cake picnic, where attendees each make a cake and share it with the others. She suggested a possible competition for the top cake.

The commission liked the idea, and Beckley said there would not be a problem holding an event like that in the Grand Hall. That event is tentatively scheduled for July 26.

Town Hall projects

Chair Lynn Lak presented a list of ongoing projects, and Beckley updated where they stand currently. The first project is replacing the portico with wood that will not rot, which Beckley said was approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Lak said clearing the files is ready to be put out of bid for shredding, and would include temporary closures of the Town Hall during clearing.

Other projects include making the bathrooms Americans with Disability Act compliant, making doors and counters ADA compliant, and refurbishing the Selectboard room.

GARDEN from page 4

borderline long enough for flowers to appear on new growth and reportedly some of these early repeat bloomers are being phased out because of it. If that’s the case, I am sure they are breeding more dependable cultivars as we speak.

I had always wanted a hydrangea and finally bought one as a Mother’s Day gift to self maybe four years ago. It is a newer generation and so far I have been very happy. It’s filled out nicely and had well over two dozen flowers last year.

Hopefully the harsh winter will not effect my hopes for a repeat performance this summer. I wish you much success and many blooms on your hydrangeas!

Roberta McQuaid grad-

uated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 34 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturist at Old Sturbridge

Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to pouimette@turley.com with “Gardening Question” in the subject line.

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Recycling Center offers bulk waste day April 18

HARDWICK – The Hardwick Recycling Center, 2011 Barre Road, will hold a Bulk Waste Collection Event on Saturday, April 18 from 8 a.m.-noon.

This event is open to the residents of Hardwick and surrounding towns. A recycling center sticker is not required.

Please note, there are fees per item charged to cover the cost of hauling and processing.

Prices are as follows: mattress/waterbed mattress/futon, \$30; couch, \$30; sleeper sofa bed/pull-out couch, \$40; loveseat/upholstered chair, \$25; pool table, \$25; wall unit cabinets, \$20; large entertainment center, \$20; sink, \$15; ceiling fan/upright fan/box fan, \$10; toilet, \$20; carpeting/foam carpet backing, \$15; kitchen/dining table, \$15; bookcase/bureau, \$15; trash compactor, \$10; wooden chair/end table/coffee table/night stand, \$12; car seat (baby/child), \$7; bulk Styrofoam (bagged), \$5; and suitcases, \$5.

The staff and volunteers reserve the right to price or reject other items not listed above accordingly on site.

For more information, people can email recycling@townofhardwick.com or stop by the Hardwick Recycling Center during open hours. Volunteers are also needed during the Bulk Waste Collection Event.

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MEET THE CANDIDATES *Forum*



CANDIDATES from page 1

was “devastating” and that Ware is “waiting on Baystate to fulfill its commitment to the town.” She said the town should follow through with the Rural Health Transformation bill, and work to get basic healthcare back to residents of Ware. “People want to go to places where they can have all their services and needs met,” Talbot said.

Granger said that there is a lack of trust in Baystate Health, and there are other options that could be looked at, including urgent care. She said an urgent care would benefit the town better than a convenient care, saying they are better for emergencies.

“Most of us do not have a lot of trust in Baystate after what they have done,” Granger said.

Hawk also highlighted a lack of trust with Baystate Health. He also said that Baystate has not submitted a clear plan on what healthcare they will bring to the town.

“We do not have a clear plan on what days they’re going to be open, what hours they will be open, and what they’re willing to provide for us,” Hawk said.

He also highlighted a need for more services, including radiology, X-ray, and pain care. Hawk said that Ware is a hub, and there is a need for multiple medical fields and services in Ware.

Town infrastructure

The candidates were asked what they believe the top capital projects are that need to be funded for Ware.

Hawk started by saying there is a “water crisis” in Ware, and that the community benefits from town water, even those that do not use it in their homes, as schools and restaurants utilize town water. Hawk suggested thinking about a water filtration plant, lining water pipes, and investing in the sewer.

“We still have water pipes and sewer pipes from the 1800s,” Hawk said.

Talbot said she is a member of the water asset infrastructure committee, and has done many studies on that committee to address the needs of the town, including a PFAS study, and a lead pipe study. She said through the committee, the Church Street water tank has been rehabbed and brought back online, and the Anderson Road water tank is being worked on now, with hopes of the project being completed soon.

She said the town is continuing to put money aside

for road paving as well.

“We have started making progress for things that were long overdue, and things that were not being addressed,” Talbot said.

Granger said water is an important issue, and supports getting it repaired. She said there is a need to “fix everything,” and has been in contact with a company that does pipe sleeving, and she said that pipes that were sleeved still work after 20 years. She said she wants to get information on that and present it to the committee.

Granger said town roads need to be repaired.

“It’s hard on the cars that drive over it on a regular basis, it’s just a nuisance,” Granger said about the roads.

Reed Memorial Pool

The candidates were asked about the closed Reed Memorial Pool, and what their view on replacing the pool was.

Granger said she thinks it should be replaced. She said the cost is an issue for many people who are concerned about rising taxes. She suggested finding funding or grants for replacing the pool, and that there is a committee working on it.

“I am for the rebuilding of the pool, and I would definitely back that,” Granger said.

Hawk questioned how the town pool fell into disarray, and whether it was the Parks Department or the location of the pool. He said there will be over 20 acres of land added to Grenville Park, and the park may be a good location for the new pool.

Hawk said he does not want to burden the taxpayers on the rebuilding of the town pool, and that the town water is an issue, and questioned why the town should spend \$3 million on a town pool before fixing the water.

“If we’re not going to drink the water, cook with the water, why are we going to spend \$3 million on a town pool?” Hawk asked.

Talbot said the town pool is close to her heart, and she worked to support its continuation and use when it was originally going to be closed in the 1990s. She said the pool “has served its life,” and its condition should not be blamed on the Parks Department.

She said she anticipates an article being put on the floor of town meeting requesting a transfer of money to support paying for the new pool. She also mentioned the possibility of making it operational year-round by putting a covering over it.

Talbot said the current

location has been proven by studies to be the most accommodating spot.

Other issues needing attention

One question asked the candidates to identify another issue besides water and healthcare that needs addressing in Ware.

Granger said there are a lot of abandoned buildings in town, and she is unsure whether there are still taxes being paid on them. She said the town should not have to bear the cost of tearing down the buildings.

Additionally, she said the Department of Public Works pay rate is low comparatively to other towns. She said the town needs to look on bringing that rate up so they can support their families.

Hawk said much of the population of Ware is living on a fixed income, or near the poverty line. He said he would work to make it more affordable to live, like putting time towards seniors and veterans.

He said people are leaving Ware for adjacent towns because of the high cost of living. Hawk said there is also an issue with the town putting the burden on taxpayers to demolish abandoned buildings.

Talbot said many of the needs of the town will cost a lot of money, and that the country is “leaning towards a recession.”

Talbot said town employees need to be paid a fair wage, and that other towns pay them more. She said paying employees a fair wage may lead to services being cut. Some main issues mentioned by Talbot were rebuilding the town pool, refurbishing the water tanks and addressing the water quality, and the Cottage Street project, involving water, sewer and paving.

Supporting of young people

The candidates were asked how they would support young people in Ware.

Talbot said she wants to see more community activities, and that there needs to be collaboration between leaders and parents. Talbot said she would support a youth center in town, but it will take creativity, and funding sources. She said the town also needs more organized sports.

“Funds actually are the issue, as well as places,” Talbot said.

Granger said youth sports are important for development. She acknowledged that there is an expense, but that there is a program families can sign up for if they are

low income. She said a children’s center would also be beneficial.

Hawk said he has experience being a part of the Hardwick Youth Center, and that there is a “crisis for our youth,” because there is little to do in small towns. He said getting volunteers to start up a youth center or community center would be beneficial, because it would be funded by donations.

Hawk also said youth sports are important, but there is a rising cost. He suggested getting sponsors from local businesses to offset the burden of the cost so all children can have access.

Honoring town meeting votes

One question asked the candidates if they would honor the votes of town meeting and special town meetings.

Hawk said town meeting is the chance for all of the residents to get together to voice concerns and their comments on articles. He said everybody gets a voice as to whether or not they agree with articles and why. Hawk said the Selectboard has to stick to whatever the town votes, regardless of agreement.

“The town has the power of making the decisions,” Hawk said.

Talbot said she always abides by the votes of town meeting, and has familiarity with the responsibilities of being a Selectboard member. She said there is an issue with attracting voters to the town meeting, and have had to reduce the quorum in the past.

“I encourage people to get interested in their government,” Talbot said.

She said town meeting is the closest thing to pass, agree, or disagree with things that will fundamentally affect the residents.

Granger said the votes of citizens should be honored, but sometimes it is not possible. She said they have to follow the votes as closely as possible. She also said people need to be enticed to come to meetings, because the residents do not want town decisions decided by 80 people.

Overrides

The candidates were asked whether they would support an override in the town. Talbot said she would support an override for community needs, but they need to determine the needs first. She also said holding study groups for residents so they can understand how it will affect their taxes would be

beneficial.

Granger said she is not sure what the overrides would be for, but would support one for the town’s needs. She said it depends on how the residents feel, and there is a balance between what the residents want and what the town can afford to do.

Hawk said he could not give a definitive answer until he has conversations with residents and town hall employees. He said it depends on what the projects the override is for, and how the residents feel help make that decision.

Professionalism

The candidates were asked how they would maintain political professionalism on the Selectboard.

Hawk said listening to the residents, and members of the select board is important to “put forward what is right for citizens.” He said working with all boards to achieve the right objective is important.

He also said they need to work together to come to compromises. Hawk acknowledged that he will have a “learning curve,” because he has not served in town government before.

“I’m willing to listen, I’m willing to learn, to work with all of the members of the select board, planning board, and all of the other committees and other boards,” Hawk said.

Talbot said she listens, rationalizes, and understands the fundamentals. She said she has worked on many committees, and is able to work within the law and with other organizations.

She said she does her own research when things are unknown. She said no individual members can make the decision, and collaboration is important.

Granger said it is important to listen, be kind, and be courteous on the select board. She said sharing research with other board members is important, because not everyone does the same research. She said it is also important to be transparent with the residents of the town.

250th celebration

The candidates were asked how they would like the 250th birthday of the United States to be celebrated, as well as a tradition in Ware they would like to see come back during their term on the Selectboard.

Granger said she is part of the 250th Celebration Committee, who are working to plan the celebrations. She said they have a one week

celebration planned, with a parade, car show, and more.

“It sounds like it’s going to be a real fun day,” Granger said.

She said she wants to see the Palmer versus Ware games return, because there was always a parade after a win. She also mentioned the high school’s winter carnival coming back.

Hawk said he is looking forward to the fireworks for the 250th at the football field. He said that location allows more access. He said there used to be a lot of parades and festivities growing up, and he looks forward to seeing them.

He said he would like to have community baseball games at Grenville Park, and utilize the two fields.

Talbot said she is also a part of the 250th Celebration Committee. She said this is a chance for the community to participate in events, and there is currently a lack of community participation. She said she hopes the activities planned will garner more participation.

Closing statements

Hawk said he was motivated to run for Selectboard after a conversation with state Rep. Todd Smola. He said he was hesitant to run because he was disabled, but learned that all it takes to run is being a resident and voter.

He also said he chose to run for fair representation. Hawk said he has worked with the town to complete the Mass Central Rail Trail, which many people are waiting for.

Talbot said she has been part of change in the community, and hopes to continue to get support. She said Ware is a town of many opinions, but everyone works together to improve quality of life in town.

Granger said she worked at Mary Lane Hospital for many years, and its demolition “broke [my] heart.” She said she wants to see healthcare come back to Ware, and does videos online of things she is passionate about like water, town employee pay, schools, roads and more.

“I promise to work towards whatever I can do to make changes in these areas,” Granger said.

She said she hopes that people reach out with questions, and is open and honest.

Election Information

The town election will be held Monday, April 13 at the Town Hall, 126 Main St., with polling hours from 7 a.m.-8 p.m. The last day to register to vote is Friday, April 3 at 5 p.m.

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Massachusetts State Button Show to be held April 11

THREE RIVERS – Massachusetts State Button Society’s spring meeting will be hosted by the Metropolitan and Monson Button Clubs on Saturday, April 11 at the AMVETS Post 74, 2159 Main St. in Three Rivers from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The public is invited to attend the day’s activities and to purchase buttons and button related items from 9 a.m.-noon, and from 1:30-3 p.m. There will be no button sales during the break from noon-1:30 p.m. as lunch, a business meeting, and auction will take place.

Morning visitors will be treated to coffee and refreshments provided by the hosting club; bring your own brown bag lunch, and dessert will be provided. There is no admission fee, and all are welcome.

FinCom reviewed preliminary budget

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – The Finance Committee reviewed the preliminary Quaboag Regional School District budget request during its March 26 meeting.



WE'RE AT A POINT WHERE THE FUNDS JUST AREN'T THERE."

STEPHEN DUFF
QRSD SUPERINTENDENT

Speaking on these requests were QRSD Superintendent, Stephen Duff, and the Director of Finance & Operations, Nicole Goncalves.

Duff said this has been a challenging budget year for the schools.

An informational meeting was held on March 23 for the parents to explain the budget options that the school committee is considering. One is a level service budget, another includes reconfiguring the elementary schools, and the other is having West Brookfield Elementary School close.

According to Duff, it is to a point where it's just not financially sustainable.

West Brookfield is looking to do an override and going over an override amount. The initial override was enough to get them to a level service budget, and nothing above minimum contribution.

There are impacting factors to these options such as reduction in staffing, and the increase of transportation.

Finance Committee Vice Chair Madeline Witaszek says this is a difficult decision because QRSD is a good school system. Witaszek also mentioned that there are a lot of towns in Massachusetts that are paying over a million dollars for above minimum contributions.

"We're at a point where the funds just aren't there," Duff said.

Goncalves began by explaining the level funded budget to the Finance Committee. The proposed amount is \$10,676,000, only \$76,000 more. This is budgeted for an 85% reimbursement rate. The transporta-

tion component is looking at about a \$1.1 million reimbursement. The charter reimbursement has decreased as well.

Already, state funding has decreased \$276,000. There is an expense problem, but there is a revenue issue going on, according to Goncalves. In total, the required contribution between both Warren and West Brookfield has gone up to about \$444,000 this year.

Transportation has a high increase, with Warren's increase being around \$300,000. Health insurance and tuition expense has gone up also. The real issue the school district is having is the lack of revenue.

If reconfigured, WBES would house grades kindergarten through grade three, and WCES grades four, five, and six. The biggest challenge with this is transportation

"Transportation almost doubles here," Goncalves said.

Duff said the school district would have to add four more buses to transportation services. In this preliminary budget, revenues stay the same and are deeply impacted by transportation and employment expenses.

Another option is closing WBES. There would be a minimum increase to operating costs and transportation would come down a bit.

The above minimum contribution would be about \$523,000. All West Brookfield students would now become reimbursable as they're within over 1.5 miles, so that would be some benefit in 2027.

Unemployment is factored in this version, as there would be significant cuts in addition to closing a school. It is ultimately a difficult decision for the Quaboag Regional School District.

According to Finance Committee Chair Raymond Kopacko the numbers in this version work. It still requires an above minimum contribution from West Brookfield to be about \$350,000. Even that amount would be a real reach with them even with the proposition 2 1/2 override.

"The only realistic option we have at the moment," Kopacko stated. "It's really important that people who really care about these things get involved before its last minute."

The School District will keep the Finance Committee up to date, and is waiting for state numbers to come in.



The annual Easter egg hunt at Lucy Stone Park in Warren will be held on Saturday, April 4.

Easter egg hunt at Lucy Stone Park

WARREN – The annual Easter egg hunt will be held at Lucy Stone Park on Saturday, April 4 with a rain date of April 11. Egg hunts will be orga-

nized by age group with children ages 5-7 starting at 10:30 a.m.; ages 8-10 starting at 10:45 a.m.; and ages 4 and under starting at 11 a.m. Please bring

your own Easter basket.

There will be prizes, an Easter raffle, refreshments and a chance to have your photo taken with the Easter Bunny.

Submitted Photo

Earth Day community cleanup to be held April 25

WARREN – The annual Warren-West Warren Earth Day Community Cleanup will be held on Saturday, April 25 from 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m., with a rain date of April 26.



Volunteers are needed, from adults to teens and supervised children. Help to keep your town clean and beautiful.

Pick up your bags and street assignment at Warren Community Elementary School's circle parking lot the day of the event at 8:45 a.m. Volunteers can register at <https://forms.office.com/r/puDFQSQ0mf> or by scanning the QR code. Registration is also available at warren-ma.gov under "Parks & Recreation Commission."

This cleanup is sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Nominations needed for historical society awards

WEST BROOKFIELD – The Quaboag Historical Society requests nominations for the annual Lucy Stone Achievement Award and the Irving and Jane England Award.

Each year, the historical society recognizes its most impressive community leaders and volunteers with these two awards. The Lucy Stone Achievement Award is given annually in observance of the commonwealth's designation of Lucy Stone Day on March 8.

Born on Coy Hill in West

Brookfield, Stone worked tirelessly throughout her life to get equal rights for all individuals. She was a lecturer for abolitionist and equal rights groups and the founder and editor of *The Woman's Journal*.

For the Lucy Stone Award, the Quaboag Historical Society requests nomination letters for anyone living in one of the six Quaboag Plantation area towns (the four Brookfields, New Braintree, and Warren). Residents are asked to nominate individuals whose vol-

unteer efforts have helped make their communities better places to live.

The nominating letters should briefly explain why the writer believes the nominee is deserving of the award. The name, address, and phone number of both the nominator and the nominee must be included in the letter.

"For this award, we are seeking nominees who have done an exemplary job of giving back through community service," said QHS Co-President Amy Dugas,

who described the motto of the Lucy Stone Award as honoring residents who make the world a better place.

The Irving and Jane England Award, also presented annually by the QHS, is given each year to a resident of West Brookfield who has helped better the community through community service. Nomination regulations for this award are the same as those for the Lucy Stone Award.

Dugas and other QHS Please see **NOMINATIONS**, page 12

WARREN BOS

from page 1

medical rate renewal with the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association with an anticipated vote to authorize the Treasurer to sign the renewal. Ferrera said there are about 45 people who use this medical insurance and said the increases for FY 27 range from 2.9% to 14.4%.

Warren's increase from last year is somewhere in the middle between those rates, listed at 7.75%.

The Town Administrator had put together a special insurance task force to look for other alternatives. The vote was unanimous after diving into potential changes to the plan. The committee didn't feel that change would be a significant decision to make at this juncture.

The committee decided to renew with MIA but will be looking at alternative plans in August.

The board's vote to authorize the Treasurer to sign renewal carried.

Town's personnel bylaw

The Selectmen discussed a draft report from the Collins Center regarding updates to the town's Personnel Bylaw. Ferrera said this is a first for the town and the report identified some policies the town should have but doesn't currently have.

Web accessibility compliance

The Selectmen continued their discussion on web accessibility compliance for the town's website, with a possible vote on a contract for additional services from CivicPlus. This is a requirement for new websites to remain compliant due to a mandate from the Department of Justice.

One component called AudioEye, is a component for accessibility issues and a document scan access for pdfs.

The board voted to approve the contract for the town's website with the additions of town services from CivicPlus.

Green Communities state grant

The board voted to accept a Green Communities grant in the amount of \$155,737, no match required, and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign and manage the grant.

Ferrera said getting this grant was very competitive and will help the elementary school building with a weatherization project and make the building be more energy efficient.

This weatherization project helps with improving doors, windows, insulation work, basically wrapping up the building and being energy efficient.

Town Administrator's report

Ferrera participated in Community Reading Day earlier in March at Warren Community Elementary School and it was described as a great day to see the school and connect with the teachers and students. The kids look forward to this event during the school year,

according to Ferrera.

"It was a community effort," Ferrera said, talking about Community Reading Day.

Ferrera also shared that both the Finance Committee and Capital Planning are working on the warrant for the Annual and Special Town Meetings. The date for these meetings will be on June 11.

Ferrera estimates there are 22 to 23 articles in place for the Annual Town Meeting, as he reaches out to other departments to address some articles.

Ferrera asked the Selectmen if they could have a brief meeting to review the warrant and articles. The board is also looking at speaking to a candidate selected for the position of Executive Assistant.

The town had plenty of applicants and have interviewed five candidates but found one who seems to be a good fit for the position. This meeting will be held on Thursday, April 2 at 6 p.m., at the Warren Senior Center, 2252 Main St., West Warren.

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Green Communities grant award to benefit WCES

Staff Report

WARREN – Town Administrator James Ferrera announced that the town was awarded a Green Communities competitive grant from the Department of Energy Resources in the amount of \$155,737 for energy efficiencies at Warren Community Elementary School.

At a March 20 press conference, Ferrera said, “This will continue with our plan for making our public buildings as energy efficient as possible. It is our goal to reduce energy consumption and costs. This project will be for the complete weatherization of the entire Warren Community Elementary School building. Securing our building envelope is a critical step in having an energy efficient building.”

Ferrera said, “For the last three fiscal years the town was awarded a total of \$751,737 in Green Communities grants. I will

continue to pursue competitive grants that will help the town become more energy efficient and reduce operating costs which will ultimately save our taxpayers money.”

In fiscal year 2025 the town was awarded a Green Communities grant for \$201,000, which was used to complete weatherization projects at the Shepard Municipal Building and Senior Center. The town also installed heat pumps at the Senior Center.

In FY 24 the town was awarded a Green Communities grant for \$395,000 to install an Energy Management System at Warren Community Elementary School, to effectively set and keep the same temperature in each of our classrooms, therefore creating a better learning environment for our students.

Quaboag Regional District Superintendent of Schools Stephen Duff said, “The prior year, we used 80,000 gallons of oil, the next year after the

grant implementation, we used 60,000 gallons of oil. Quite a savings to the district. We hope to continue this savings trend.”

Quaboag Regional School Committee Chair Greg Morse said, “Each dollar used for expenses is one dollar less used in front of the students.”

Shannon Sullivan, Associate Community Development Planner of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission said, “This grant process is competitive. Grants are awarded in a process with detail and community support. The Town of Warren has demonstrated the need and value of the grant system.”

The Green Communities grant process strives to help all 351 Massachusetts cities and towns find clean energy solutions that reduce long-term energy costs and strengthen local economies.



Turley Staff Photos

Town Administrator James Ferrera, Quaboag Regional School District Superintendent Stephen Duff and Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission’s Shannon Sullivan, attended the press conference.

ABOVE: Shown from left to right are Stephen Duff, Superintendent of Quaboag Regional School District; Carol Forward, Warren Community Elementary School principal; Greg Morse, Quaboag Regional School Committee chair; James Ferrera, Warren Town Administrator; Shannon Sullivan, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission; and Quaboag Regional School Committee members Christine Luszcz and Rachel Kennan, at a recent press conference to announce a Green Communities grant to benefit Warren Community Elementary School.



Quaboag Hills

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Youth baseball president takes interim helm of Ware High baseball

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

WARE— During the past eight years, Shawn Clark served as the junior varsity coach and the assistant varsity coach for the Ware High School baseball team. Clark is stepping into a new coaching position this spring.

Clark was recently appointed as the Indians interim varsity baseball coach by athletic director

Thomas Shamgochain.

"I'm really looking forward to my new coaching position," said Clark, who takes over the reins from Scott Slattery. "I do have some big shoes to fill, but I've learned from a lot of very good people."

Clark will need to replace five players from last year's squad, which finished with an impressive 20-3 record. Ware's outstanding season came to an end following

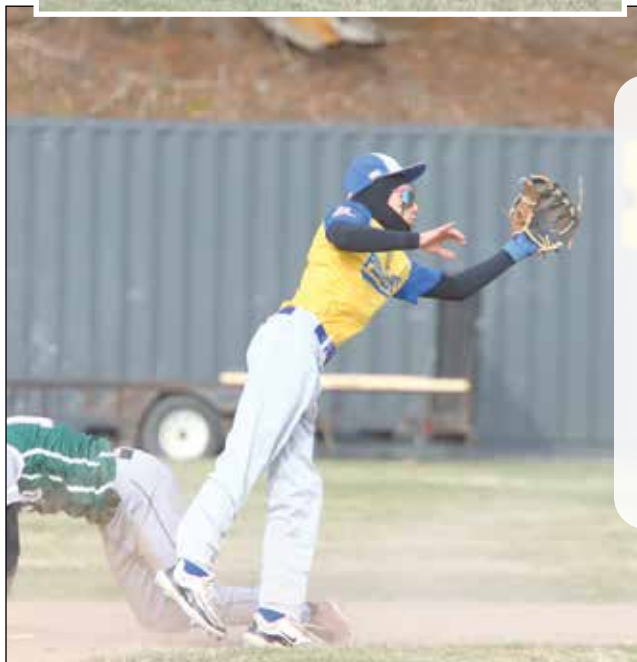
a loss to Hopedale in the Elite 8 game of the Division 5 state tournament. The Indians also lost to Hopkins Academy in the Western Mass. Class D semifinals.

"I'm very familiar with the players on this year's baseball team," Clark said. "I've coached them at either the youth or junior varsity level. It's been an easy transition for me so far. I just want the players to keep improving each day."

The six seniors listed on the Indians 2026 varsity roster are Troy Dufresne, Brady Guimond, Jack Gaudreau, Brodie Koczur, Alex Orszulak, and Kyle Kaczuwka.

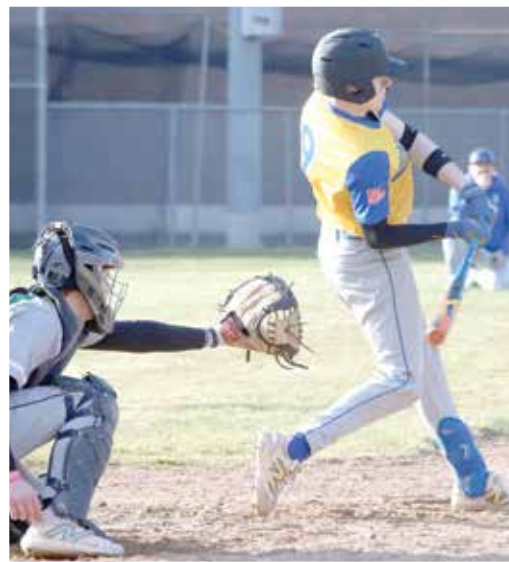
"The seniors have been working very hard and they're also outstanding leaders," Clark said. "They've helped continued our win-

Please see **BASEBALL**, page 10



PALMER – The Pathfinder Tech baseball team got their season started very early with a cold afternoon at Legion Field in Palmer. The Pioneers were scored on early and often and lost to McCann Tech 13-2. McCann had an eight-run first inning to pace the game. Pathfinder only got two runs in the bottom of the third inning. The Pioneers are back in action on Friday, Apr. 3 against Palmer High School at 4 p.m.

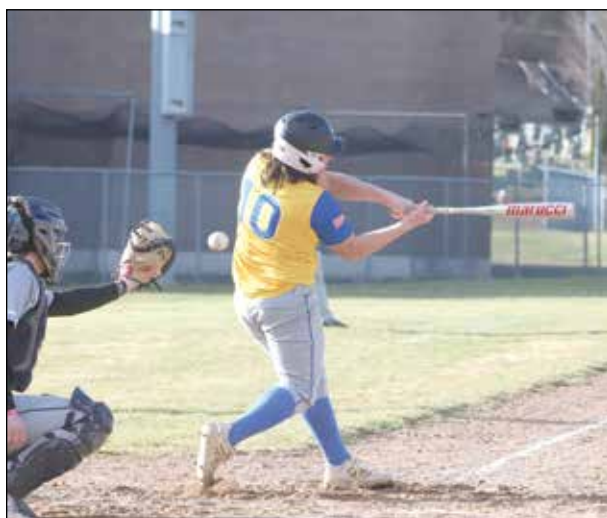
Pioneers have tough opener



Anthony Elliott extends to catch an out at first.



Outfielder Andrew Sullivan sends a throw back to the infield.



Brody Wetnicka fouls off a pitch.



Zachary Smith pitches in relief for the Pioneers.



Dayne Shanley takes a swing and sends a base hit to right.



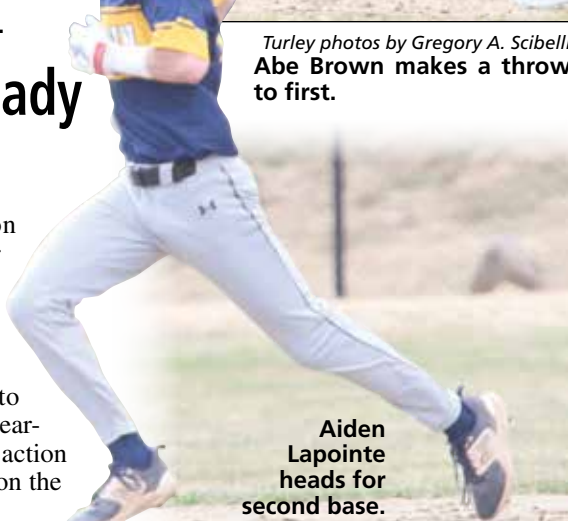
Adam Adams sends a pitch to the plate.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Abe Brown makes a throw to first.

Quabbin baseball ready to take next step

BARRE – After an improved season where several young players got a year more experienced, Quabbin Regional High School baseball is ready to get the regular season underway. The Panthers had a scrimmage against Marlborough last Tuesday on the road and were set to take on Quaboag in their season opener earlier this week. The Panthers are back in action on Monday, Apr. 6 taking on South High on the road.



Aiden Lapointe heads for second base.



SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 10.

Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Abby Rogowski sends a pitch home.

BARRE – Last week, the preparation continued for the regular season for Quabbin Regional High School softball. The younger team had a scrimmage against Marlborough and was scheduled to face Quaboag on the road earlier this week. Coming up, the Panthers will host Tahanto on Wednesday, Apr. 8 at 4 p.m.

Kai Schuster heads for second base.

Panthers ready to roar in softball



sports

Railers suffer loss to Wheeling

WHEELING, WV — The Worcester Railers HC (27-28-5-2, 61 pts) fell short to the Wheeling Nailers (41-16-3-3, 88 pts) in a narrow 2-1 loss on Saturday, March 28th at WesBanco Arena, in front of a crowd of 3,588. The Railers will wrap up their weekend road trip in Wheeling with a final matchup against the Nailers on Sunday, March 29th, with a 4:10 p.m. EDT puck drop.

Anthony Repaci (1-0-1) got things going for Worcester as he collected a chance bounce off a Nailers skate at 7:16 in the first. Wheeling evened the score with a bar-down tally ten minutes later from Connor Lockhart (1-0-1)(1-1). A tip from Matty De St. Phalle (1-0-1) at 19:20 closed out scoring for the first period and put the Nailers ahead by one (2-1). There were no other goals scored for the remainder of the game for a narrow 2-1 final.

Worcester got themselves on the board early in the first as Anthony Repaci (20th) lit the lamp unassisted at 7:16. Repaci maneuvered the puck out in front after a ricochet off the heel of a Nailers skate kept the game alive in the zone. Connor Lockhart

(20th) erased the one-goal lead ten minutes later with a bar-down shot sent sailing high over netminder Parker Gahagen. A shot from Brent Johnson was tipped along the way by Matty De St. Phalle (10th) at 19:20 and sent the puck wide of Gahagen to put the Nailers in the lead as the game transitioned into its second frame. Wheeling narrowly led in shots on goal with 14 to Worcester's 13. The sole penalty of the period was called on Wheeling's De St. Phalle for tripping at 12:55.

The middle frame was an action-packed affair of shed gloves and flying fists. Tensions ran high between Max Dorrington and Matt Quercia, who kicked off the stream of penalties to follow. Dorrington and Quercia squared off at center ice and put on a show for the onlooking crowd. The pair skated to their respective penalty boxes for a five-minute stretch as play returned. Lincoln Hatten and Aidan Sutter eagerly kept things going and soon joined their teammates in the box for roughing 25 seconds later. Cole Donhauser and Brent Johnson would complete the trifectas for each side as

well, with less than a minute gone from the clock. As the boxes emptied, Riley Piercey and Max Graham took their turn in the ring at 14:08, and much like Dorrington and Quercia, would remain there for the next five minutes. Gleb Veremyev capped off the second period rap sheet with a holding call at 18:36, which handed Wheeling their only power play opportunity of the evening. Shots in the period were 20-10 in favor of Worcester.

Veremyev's call from the close of the second carried over for 36 seconds into the third and gave the Nailers an extra man advantage in the final frame. Worcester put on another offensively-dominated performance with three consecutive power play chances that bracketed the split of the period. Neither side found the back of the net, which left the Railers down by one at the close as the Nailers clinched the first spot in the Kelly Cup Playoffs for the North Division. Worcester's shots on goal totaled 50 across the evening to Wheeling's 27. Worcester skated away clean with no penalties in the final frame, while Wheeling collected three.



Turley photos by Gregory A. Scibelli
Jenna Rosen takes a swing.



Josie Castell takes a lead off first base.

LADY PANTHERS READY TO ROAR

T-Birds grab win over Lehigh Phantoms

ALLENTOWN, PA — The Springfield Thunderbirds (26-29-6-2) got big performances from their leadership group en route to a 5-3 win over the Lehigh Valley Phantoms (27-30-3-3) on Friday night in a pivotal Atlantic Division battle inside the PPL Center. With the win, the T-Birds jumped back into the sixth and final playoff position in the Atlantic Division with nine games remaining.

Veteran leaders helped set the early tone for Springfield as captain Chris Wagner dropped a pass inside the blue line to Dillon Dube, who wired a wrister past Aleksei Kolosov at 7:28 of the first to hand the T-Birds the 1-0 advantage.

Lehigh Valley got a response courtesy of one of their veteran leaders 4:17 later as Anthony Richard finished a backhand bid past Vadim Zherenko off a set-up pass by pro debutant Cole Knuble to tie the score, 1-1.

Numerous scoring chances and one power play for each team also came up empty as Zherenko finished a busy first with nine saves, while Kolosov stopped the other 11

offerings that came into his crease.

The T-Birds' leadership group was not finished putting their stamp on the contest, as Dube created a turnover deep in the Lehigh Valley zone, nudging the puck into the slot for Wagner, who rifled a forehand through Kolosov at 7:09 of the second, extending the Springfield advantage to 2-1.

Zherenko barely had to lift a finger in the middle period as the T-Birds allowed a season-low two shots in the frame. However, the Phantoms' penalty kill, which had been struggling mightily against the T-Birds, answered the bell with two man-down successes to keep their deficit at a single goal heading into the final period.

After failing to equalize on a power play to begin the third, the Phantoms eventually got the game squared up again at 6:32 when David Jiricek found Zayde Wisdom crashing the net to make it a 2-2 score.

Unruffled, the T-Birds then turned the game on its head with three goals in a 4:28 blitz, beginning with

Alek Kaskimaki scooping up a rebound in the blue paint at 9:08 to restore the Springfield lead, 3-2. Wagner and Dube each picked up their third points of the night on the helpers.

Just 2:10 later, Marc-Andre Gaudet made an alert read up on the right-wing wall to steal a puck off a Phantoms defender before setting up Juraj Pekarcik for an insurance making tally and a 4-2 lead. Pekarcik also drew a Springfield power play following a post-goal cross-check by Sawyer Boulton.

The T-Birds did not score on the ensuing power play, but it set the table for Hugh McGing to join the party at 13:36, firing a perfect shot into the top shelf from the left circle and giving Springfield the 5-2 advantage.

Oscar Eklind finally halted the T-Birds scoring run at 17:44, but it proved to be too little, too late for Lehigh Valley. Zherenko needed to make just 18 saves for his 14th win of the season, while Kolosov had 27 stops in the losing effort for the Phantoms.

Registration continues for new players in Quabbin Valley Baseball League

SOUTH HADLEY — Registration for new players in the Quabbin Valley Baseball League, an over-28 recreational league, continues. The league is now headed for its open practices for new players and the new-player draft for players looking to join the league.

There will be open practices for all players but specifically targeted at new players scheduled for Mar. 29 and Apr. 4 at times and locations to be announced. The draft is currently scheduled to take place on Apr. 4 following that practice. Any players who sign up will be contacted directly for the time and location of the open practice.

For the 2026 season, the cost will be \$215 and will include a 16th game added to the regular season schedule.

During the 2025 season, the league experimented with playing on Mother's Day Saturday as well as a weeknight game to allow players an opportunity to



play under the lights. While the night games were very successful, the Mother's Day Saturday games were rained out.

Those elements will return along with a 16th game with an opponent to be determined as the league's board explores possibilities for interleague matchups with another league in the region.

The season is currently slated to start on Sunday, April 19 and following the success of the six-team fall league last year, the league will also have a fall league in September and October this season.

The registration is live at www.quabbinvalleybaseball.org. Players must register and then pay the league dues via Venmo or contact the league leadership if an alternate form of payment is needed.

Aside from the weeknight and Mother's Day games, other games take place Sundays at 10 a.m. outside of Mother's Day, Memorial Day and July 4 weekends. Playoffs will be in August.

This is the 30th season for the league and league officials are looking to celebrate the anniversary with a couple of events.

BASEBALL from page 9

ning tradition during the past several years."

Clark, who graduated from Ware High School in 1993, was a sophomore member of the baseball team, which defeated Granby in the 1991 Western Mass. Division 3 championship game. He was also a member of the Indians football team.

"I was teammates with a couple of the fathers of the current varsity players when I was in high school," Clark said. "It's a lot of fun having the opportunity to coach their kids."

One of Clark's high school baseball teammates was Brian Guimond, who's

currently the varsity baseball coach at Quaboag Regional. The Indians are slated to play a non-league game at Quaboag on April 28.

The Indians will be playing their home games at St. Joe's Park in Thorndike this spring.

"Due to the ongoing renovations at Memorial Field, we are unable to play our home games at that field," Clark said. "We're lucky to have a field in a neighboring town where we can play our home games. We need our fans to come support us like they also did when we played at Memorial Field."

St. Joe's field does have lights, but the start of the varsity night games might be

delayed for several minutes due to the sun setting in centerfield.

The Indians J.V. and varsity baseball teams will be practicing on the field located behind the Stanley M. Koziol Elementary School.

Ware was scheduled to begin the regular season with a non-league game against Greenfield High School at St. Joe's on Tuesday night.

Ware will also be playing two games at Dunkin Park this spring. Their first game will be against Monson at 6:30 on April 11. The Indians

will also be making another trip to the home of the Hartford Yard Goats against Ellington (Conn) High School at 3:30 pm on May 5.

"We've played one game at Dunkin Park during the past couple of years," Clark said. "We'll be playing two games there this year. The j.v. players will also be coming on the bus with us. It's an incredible experience for the kids"

Ware is also scheduled to host rival Palmer on May 4.

"The Palmer-Ware rivalry is always very important in every sport," Clark said. "All of the players know each other very well."

The Indians are now members of the Suburban West Division, along with Monument Mtn., Wahconah Regional, Drury, Southwick, and Hampshire Regional.

Clark has also been the

President of Ware Youth Baseball for the past 17 years.

"The youth baseball program has been very successful over the years," Clark said. "We do have a lot of kids playing this year. Our opening day ceremony is scheduled to be held on May 9."

The Indians interim j.v. baseball coach is Peter Millet.

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New restaurant opened in West Warren

By Ryan Drago
Staff Writer
rdrago@turley.com

WARREN – Arista Restaurant officially opened for business last month in West Warren

A ribbon cutting was held during opening day on March 16 and the American cuisine restaurant has been well received by customers.

Arista Restaurant is run by business partners Brent Gurel and Jim Mertek.

Gurel is based out of the Boston area and has a background in cooking and the restaurant business. His family used to own their own restaurant. Mertek has a background in management and partnered up with Gurel to introduce Arista Restaurant.

The two came to the town in December 2025 and wanted to offer a dining space for the community.

They wanted a positive sounding name that patrons will remember. After taking some time to research, Gurel and Mertek came across the word “arista,” a name with a positive meaning dating back to ancient Greece.

Arista, originating from the Greek word “aristos,” means the best or most excellent. The name is also associated with nobility, high achievement and leadership.

Gurel found it as a simple and nice sounding name suitable for a restaurant. What came next was deciding where to operate a restaurant. Gurel and Mertek had thought about running a restaurant in a city environment but soon decided on locating to a smaller town where locals can enjoy a dining space they can go to regularly.

Gurel shared that he is a fan of the popular television sitcom, “Cheers”. This

show’s theme song features the lyrics, “Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name.”

This is the kind of place Gurel wants Arista Restaurant to be like in Warren. A place where locals come by and everyone knows each other.

Gurel, Mertek and their staff trust their food and want to offer the best of it as well as offer the best service.

Gurel describes Arista Restaurant as more than a business, but a “lifestyle business.” A lifestyle of customer interaction and where friendships can be formed.

“A lifestyle of business and friends,” Gurel said.

At the grand opening, the owners and their staff were happy about the turnout and the reception they got from the town. When the doors were finally opened for business and customers and members of the community made their way to experience Arista Restaurant, Gurel and Mertek realized they made a good decision in choosing Warren.

From Gurel’s standpoint, the locals were excited to see a new business opening in town, and it’s a new restaurant where locals can go to eat.

Arista has over 20 staff in total with some being full-time, part-time, and teenagers who help on weekends. Gurel says all the chefs at Arista are phenomenal and they work great as a team and know the customers well.

Since their official opening, Arista has gotten a lot of positive feedback from their customers and feel they’re living up to their focus to become a staple in the community. Gurel feels the town is supporting them as they plan to stick around for a longtime.

“We really appreciate it a



Turley Staff Photo

Participating in the grand opening ribbon cutting ceremony were from left to right, Dustin Pennington, Ware Business & Civic Association and Beyond director; James Ferrara, Town Administrator; state Sen. Jake Oliveira; Arista’s Restaurant co-owners, Jim Mertek and Brent Gurel; Selectman Rich Eichacker; and Micah Hinckley, co-owner, Pennington Painting Services.

lot,” Gurel said.

The menu at Arista Restaurant is accommodating for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. For breakfast, there are plenty of delicious options patrons are familiar with. There are omelets, breakfast sandwiches, pancakes, French toast, Belgian waffles, and much more.

One popular breakfast item Arista’s Restaurant is getting attention for is their eggs benedict. A regular eggs benedict features two poached eggs with Canadian bacon on a toasted English muffin, topped with hollandaise sauce and comes with home fries. Arista Restaurant’s breakfast menu also features avocado benedict, and Florentine benedict.

For lunch, Arista Restaurant is proud of their hamburgers and is considered one of the best hamburgers in the region. On their menu is the Local Hero Burger, which has a special promotion on it. This burger comes with bacon, cheddar cheese, lettuce, tomato, red onion,

pickles and thousand island sauce.

One dollar from every Local Hero Burger sold supports the local community. At the end of the year, Arista Restaurant will add their total number of funds raised from these hamburgers and donate the amount towards the town. This fund will go to support various causes in the community.

Arista Restaurant is looking to establish ties with the local communities and support various departments and support the schools. As they build on their business and build community relationships, Arista is aiming at offering more services, such as private functions.

Once business picks up, Arista plans to offer more specials on their menu. The current specials they offer are posted on their chalk board inside the restaurant. In addition to their hamburgers and eggs benedict, Arista’s sandwiches are also adored by customers.

Arista Restaurant also has

a kid’s menu available for their young customers who are dining with their families.

This neighborhood restaurant is open seven days a week from 9 a.m.-8 p.m. To get a glimpse of their menu, visit Arista Restaurant on their Facebook page.

Visit Arista Restaurant at 2162 Main St. in West Warren.

Going forward, Gurel says he wants Arista Restaurant to be a staple in the community.

“A get together location,” he stated. “A place where Arista comes to people’s mind.”

Arista Restaurant is a place where all gatherings are welcome and is a place to eat and stay for a good time.

NEWS & FEATURES

As a paper of record, we attempt to cover all general news, personality profiles, and community features that we know about. This includes all selectmen and school committee meetings as well as spot planning board, board of health, finance, and other town meetings determined by the issue’s relevance to our readers. There are the annual major community event features that we should always cover, but we are more than open to suggestions of other features to celebrate the fabric of our communities and their many interesting occupants. Our loyal advertisers provide funding for this paid staff coverage.

For more information on news or community features for The Ware River News, please email warerivernews@turley.com.

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Four stages of raising confident, money-smart kids

Good financial habits are a little like brushing your teeth. When you learn them early, they become second nature, and you carry them with you for life. And while money can feel complicated, especially today, the foundation starts simply.

Parents can begin the conversation with very young children, and young adults can build on those basics as they take on more responsibility. Step by step, these habits create confidence that helps build longterm financial security and a more fulfilling life.

The following are the four key stages of financial growth.

Stage 1: For very young children, the goal is to make money feel simple and manageable. A great place to start is with three jars labeled “Spend,” “Save” and “Share.” When kids can actually see their money grow or shrink, the idea starts to make sense. Saving also introduces them to goalsetting, and working toward paying for a small toy or outing teaches patience. Most important, you’re helping your children see money as a tool they can understand easily and use with confidence.

Stage 2: If you have tweens (children roughly 9 to 12 years old), they’re usually ready for slightly bigger financial ideas. This is a great time for them to earn money through chores or small jobs, helping them see the connection between effort and reward and building a sense of ownership. Conversations about needs versus wants also become more meaningful, because kids are now making real choices with money they earned themselves. Your tween may be ready for a simple savings account to watch their savings grow, or a reloadable cash card for spending.

Stage 3: By the time teens reach high school or young adulthood, budgeting becomes essential. This doesn’t need to be overly strict or complicated. A simple system that helps them track deposits and withdrawals can make all the difference. Whether they use an app, a paper notebook or a spreadsheet, the real goal is awareness. Teenagers also benefit from learning how credit works. Understanding how to build a healthy credit score and how to use credit wisely protects them from costly mistakes in later life.

Stage 4: Then come the early working years, when habits shift from learning to building. One of the smartest steps at this stage is paying yourself first. Automatic transfers to savings or retirement accounts help establish stability without extra effort. Even small retirement contributions matter more than most people realize, because time allows compounding to do the heavy lifting. This is also when young adults can start organizing their money into different buckets for rent, automobile payments, emergencies, retirement and everyday spending. These habits help lay the groundwork for financial freedom down the road.

Throughout every stage, the theme is confidence. Each small success creates a sense of control and each good habit makes the next one easier. Over time, these habits turn into a lifetime of financial security and fulfillment. When you start strong and stay consistent, money becomes a tool that helps your children support the lives they want.

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public safety

Ware Police Log

During the week of March 24-31, the Ware Police Department responded to 28 miscellaneous calls, 27 administrative calls, eight traffic violations, seven emergency 911 calls, four harassments/stalks/threats, one trespass, eight thefts/larcenies, three frauds, two disturbances, two assist other agencies, six animal calls and 30 motor vehicle stops in the town of Ware.

Services Rendered
4:28 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, West Street, Services Rendered
5:21 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Main Street, Services Rendered
6:34 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, North Street, Investigated
10:55 p.m. Disturbance/Nuisance, Otis Avenue, Investigated

Friday, March 27

3:45 a.m. Suspicious/Wanted, West Street, Investigated
9:04 a.m. Fraud/Deception, North Street, Services Rendered
9:53 a.m. Disturbance/Nuisance, Palmer Road, Services Rendered
11:33 a.m. Trespass/Unwanted, West Street, Advised
12:47 p.m. Train/Rail Derailment, Knox Avenue, Services Rendered
12:56 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Main Street, Services Rendered
5:15 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Street, Citation/Warning Issued
5:39 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Highland Village, Dispatch Handled
8:18 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Old Belchertown Road, Services Rendered
9:41 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Maple Street, Dispatch Handled

Saturday, March 28

1:43 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Pine Street, Report Made
12:47 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Advised
1:22 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Knox Avenue, Services Rendered
4:57 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Palmer Road, Services Rendered
6:38 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Monson Turnpike Road, Services Rendered

Tuesday, March 24

8:53 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Advised
10:32 a.m. Fraud/Deception, North Street, Services Rendered
6 p.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, North Street, Advised
6:07 p.m. Theft/Larceny, West Street, Could Not Locate
6:44 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Pleasant Street, Could Not Locate
7:45 p.m. Warrant Service, Pine Street, Arrest Made

Wednesday, March 25

5:48 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Street, Criminal Complaint Request
12:19 p.m. Suspicious/Wanted, Longview Avenue, Services Rendered

Thursday, March 26

12:37 a.m. Suspicious/Wanted, West Street, Investigated
8:19 a.m. Traffic Violation/Hazard, West Street, Complaint Taken Care Of
8:34 a.m. Assault, West Street, Investigated
8:53 a.m. Traffic Violation/Hazard, Main Street, Assist Given
10:45 a.m. Theft/Larceny, West Street, Services Rendered
2:31 p.m. Fraud/Deception, North Street,

Editor's Note: People in this country are presumed to be innocent until found guilty in a court of law. Police provide us with the information you read on this page as public record information. If you or any suspect listed here is found not guilty or has charges dropped or reduced, we will gladly print that information as a follow-up upon being presented with documented proof of the court's final disposition.

Sunday, March 29

1:43 p.m. Abandoned 911 Call, West Street, No Action Required
2:26 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Main Street, Assist Given
10:03 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Main Street, Report Made

Monday, March 30

2:29 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, West Main Street, Citation/Warning Issued
3:08 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, Maple Street, Dispatch Handled
3:33 a.m. Harassment/Stalk/Threat, Otis Avenue, Services Rendered
11:32 a.m. Traffic Violation/Hazard, Palmer Road, Report Made
11:53 a.m. Assault, West Street, Services Rendered
6:41 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Street, Citation/Warning Issued
7:33 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, East Street, Citation/Warning Issued
8:37 p.m. Theft/Larceny, Main Street, Report Made

Tuesday, March 31

12:17 a.m. Deceased Person, West Main Street, Assist Given
9:58 a.m. Theft/Larceny, Palmer Road, Report Made
10:58 a.m. Assault, Eddy Street, Patient Refusal
11:26 a.m. Abandoned 911 Call, West Street, Investigated

Hardwick Police Log

During the week of March 24-30, the Hardwick New Braintree Police Department responded to 55 building/property checks, 26 directed/area patrols, 21 radar assignments, eight emergency 911 calls, four citizen assists, two assist other agencies, two complaints, three safety hazards, one missing person, one fire, one stolen motor vehicle, six investigations, one threat, one fraud, one scam, three motor vehicle accidents, four animal calls and 19 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

1:50 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Barre Road, Written Warning
10:45 p.m. Stolen Motor Vehicle, Lower Road, Patient Refusal

Tuesday, March 24

1:37 a.m. Investigation, Barre Road, Spoken To
3:18 a.m. Safety Hazard, Hardwick Center/Gilbertville, Services Rendered
11:54 a.m. Investigation, Lower Road, Spoken To
5:04 p.m. 911 Welfare Check, Jackson Road, Spoken To
5:10 p.m. Threat, High Street, Report Taken
5:32 p.m. Investigation, Barre Road, Spoken To

Wednesday, March 25

1:26 p.m. Investigation, Hardwick Road, No Action Required
2:16 p.m. Fraud, Lower Road, Spoken To
2:20 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Main Street, Officer Handled
2:50 p.m. Complaint, River Run, Officer Handled
4:32 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Hardwick Road, Citation Issued
5:38 p.m. Disturbance, Broad Street, Spoken To
8:48 p.m. 911 Motor

Monday, March 23

8:50 a.m. Investigation, Main Street, Officer Handled
9:25 a.m. Assist Citizen, Barre Road, Officer Handled
9:50 a.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Officer Handled
9:52 a.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Officer Handled
10:46 a.m. Missing Person, Church Street, Officer Handled
11:44 a.m. 911 Fire/Other, Ridge Road, Services Rendered
1:35 p.m. Investigation, Main Street, Negative Contact
2:14 p.m. Assist Citizen, Main Street, Services Rendered

Vehicle Crash, Czesky Road, Transported to Hospital

Thursday, March 26

10:23 a.m. 911 Safety Hazard, Petersham Road, Officer Handled
10:56 a.m. Safety Hazard, Still Life Farm, No Action Required
2:08 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Abandoned, Hardwick Road, Negative Contact
3:23 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Upper Church Street, Officer Handled
4:35 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Crash, Barre Road, Officer Handled
5:01 p.m. Complaint, Barre Road, Officer Handled

Friday, March 27

5:40 p.m. Scam, Charity Hill Road, Spoken To
9:05 p.m. Medical Alarm, Turkey Street, Patient Refusal

Saturday, March 28

5:16 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning

Sunday, March 29

10:31 a.m. Assist Other Agency, Main Street, Officer Handled
1:25 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
3:07 p.m. 911 Motor Vehicle Crash, Hardwick Road, Report Taken
4:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
5:31 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
6 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Lower Road, Criminal Complaint

Warren Police Log

During the week of March 8-14, the Warren Police Department responded to 155 building/property checks, 11 community policings, 12 emergency 911 calls, two safety concerns, one fraud/forgery, two parking issues, one complaint, one smoke investigation, one illegal burn, one property damage, two motor vehicle accidents, four animal calls and 23 motor vehicle stops in the town of Warren.

Sunday, March 8

10:06 a.m. Unwanted Party, Little Rest Road, Report Filed
12:11 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Misdial/Abandoned, Crescent Street, Report Filed

Monday, March 9

7:20 a.m. Motor Vehicle Hit and Run, Southbridge Road, Report Filed
11:40 a.m. Fraud or Forgery, Pulaski Street, Officer/Chief Advised
6:47 p.m. Welfare Check, Pine Grove Drive, Report Filed

Tuesday, March 10

1:08 a.m. Noise Complaint, Old West Warren Road, Officer Spoke to Party
1:59 a.m. Motor Vehicle

Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
8:21 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Boston Post Road, Criminal Complaint
9:17 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident, Parkview Street, Report Filed
12:02 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Burbank Avenue, Citation Issued
12:32 p.m. Assist Other Agency, Keys Road, Report Filed
5:54 p.m. 911 Hang-up/Misdial/Abandoned, Comins Pond Road, Officer/Chief Advised
7:30 p.m. Safety Concern, Main Street, Officer Spoke to Party
8:26 p.m. Smoke Investigation, Hitchcock Avenue, Investigated

Wednesday, March 11

10:11 a.m. Property Damage, Winthrop Terrace, Report Filed
11:53 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
12:43 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Citation Issued
3:35 p.m. Fire/Illegal Burn, South Street, Report Filed
4:07 p.m. Chest Pain/Heart Problem, Main Street,

Transported to Hospital
4:27 p.m. Disturbance/Disorderly, Main Street, Report Filed

Thursday, March 12

10:10 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Vehicle Towed
12:45 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Village Point Plaza Parking Lot, Written Warning
1:23 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Washington Street, Written Warning
2:07 p.m. Parking Issues, Reed Street, Officer Spoke to Party
8:28 p.m. Suspicious Activity, Bemis Road, Report Filed

Friday, March 13

8:52 a.m. Falls, Main Street, Ambulance Signed Refusal
12:50 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop, Main Street, Written Warning
2:43 p.m. Assault and Battery, Winthrop Terrace, Peace Restored

Saturday, March 14

11:02 a.m. Parking Issues, Comins Pond Road, Removed From Scene
2:36 p.m. Safety Concern, River Street, Negative Contact

Northwestern DA's Office released 'Brady Letters' pursuant to court order

NORTHAMPTON – The Northwestern District Attorney's Office has complied with a Suffolk Superior Court Judge's order to release so-called "Brady letters" under the state's public records law.

The order, dated Dec. 30, 2025, concluded a dispute over the letters that began in January 2022, when journalist Andrew Quemere submitted a public records request to the NWDAO seeking access to the office's Brady list and related materials.

The term "Brady" refers to the landmark United States Supreme Court decision *Brady v. Maryland* (1963), which requires prosecutors to disclose favorable evidence to criminal defendants, including information that may bear on the credibility of law enforcement officers.

Shortly after receiving the request, the NWDAO produced 191 pages of responsive documents, but redacted the names of the officers involved and any docket numbers of criminal cases brought against them. The NWDAO took the position that this information was exempt from disclosure under several provisions of the public records law.

One such exemption involves information protected by the Massachusetts' Criminal Offender Record Information Act, which strictly governs access to and dissemination of criminal

record information and provides for criminal penalties for violations of the statute.

Quemere appealed the redactions to the Supervisor of Records and, in June 2023, filed a lawsuit challenging the NWDAO's determination. The central legal issue in the case was whether the names and docket numbers contained in Brady-related correspondence constitute public records, or whether they were exempt from disclosure.

In December 2025, Suffolk Superior Court Judge Julie E. Green ruled that while the NWDAO appropriately "proceed[ed] with caution where the confidentiality of potential CORI was at stake," the specific information at issue qualifies as public record and must be disclosed. Prior to this decision, there was no clear Massachusetts case law on the question of whether Brady letters were exempt from disclosure under the public records law. The Judge further found that the NWDAO acted in "good faith" in redacting the records and defending against the lawsuit.

Now, to comply fully with the Court's ruling, the NWDAO has released un-redacted copies of the 191 Brady letters. These letters pertain to a total of 31 police officers. Most officers have more than one letter because a new letter was generated

each time the officer was identified as a potential witness in a case. Accordingly, the majority of the 191 Brady letters are duplicates generated for case-specific disclosure purposes.

Of the 31 police officers referenced in the 191 Brady letters, only 10 pertain to active police officers who currently work within the Northwestern District. The letters pertain to conduct that dates back as far as 2002.

Eight involve internal sustained findings of wrongdoing by their departments, and two involve criminal charges that were ultimately dismissed. Nine of the 10 letters contain information that is already publicly available through the Massachusetts Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission.

POST is an independent state oversight agency whose primary purpose is to improve policing standards and increase public confidence in law enforcement by establishing a statewide system for certifying police officers. POST is responsible for certifying all law enforcement officers in Massachusetts, reviewing officer conduct, and taking disciplinary action. POST also maintains public databases that allow the public to view officer certification status and certain disciplinary

Please see **DA'S OFFICE**, page 13

QRSD BUDGET from page 5

what they have done, and what they are looking forward to doing. They said for students coming into the school for the first time, they held a school tour so rising middle schoolers will know where they are going once they start.

The council members said they attended the Massachusetts Association of School Committees President's dinner, the MASC conference in Hyannis, helped with ninth grade elections, attended a conference at Easthampton High School, held fundraisers, tied up teachers' classrooms, and played unified bocce with the

LEAP room students.

They said their next events are an Easter egg hunt, a spring conference in Greenfield, a suicide awareness walk in Grenville Park, and Choose to Include campaign activities.

Field trip approval

The committee approved two baseball field trips to Connecticut on April 11 and May 5, in Hartford and Ellington, Connecticut

Interim Superintendent contract

The committee voted 3-1 to approve the contract of interim superintendent Wood for FY 27, effective July 1. Whitham voted against the contract.

NOMINATIONS from page 7

leaders feel it's important to take a few moments each year to honor those who contribute countless hours to improving their communities.

"Those people willing to put in the time and get involved and make a significant contribution to the community should be recognized," Dugas added.

All award nomination entries should be submitted to the QHS by Monday, April 13.

Nomination letters should be mailed to The Quaboag Historical Society, P.O. Box 635, West Brookfield, MA 01585.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661**.



Turley Photos by Paula Quimette
Interim Library Director of the Gilbertville Public Library, Laura Grunberg, was joined by Deb Deschamps and Barry Koch for an a cappella rendition of "Lean on Me".



Ricky Hillson traveled from Cape Cod to share the peaceful sounds of the handpan.



Laura Grunberg, interim library director of the Gilbertville Public Library, gave a slide presentation about the history of the library, and the time period of when it was built.

LIBRARY from page 1

was only fitting that it would provide a cozy place for young readers to curl up with a book.

The children's room also has an impressive animal puppet collection, which is enjoyed by patrons of all ages (even those who are just young at heart).

Animals are a common theme throughout the library, which recently adopted the otter as its mascot. The otter is a native inhabitant of the nearby Ware River, a waterway that not only supports abundant wildlife, but also powered the industry that shaped the village.

As you enter the front doors of the building and look up, you will see a giant

set of furry paws. To your right, you'll see a sign pointing you in the direction of "the shoebill."

The shoebill statue was created by Grunberg as her entry at the Hardwick Community Fair, and it has now found a new perch in the library, towering over library patrons.

To your left, you will find a reading nook, outfitted with repurposed cushions from the Hardwick Recycling Center's swap shed, and a mirror that belonged to the late Steve Olivo, a beloved Gilbertville resident known for his sense of humor, generosity and love of community.

Grunberg invited those attending the celebration to sit down for a slide presentation that gave the history of



the library, as well as a look at what life was like when it was built.

"The library was built when the Greatest Generation was born," she said.

The library was just one part of the social life of Gilbertville's mill workers, who also spent time at the Polish hall, the Star movie theater and the Union Hotel. The hotel had "the best and only pizza in town," Grunberg said.

Sadly, the Polish hall has been closed since 2011, the Union Hotel gave way

to Cumberland Farms, and the Star sits vacant and condemned on Church Street.

"Do we want the library to have the same fate?" Grunberg asked. "No."

The library has a list of needs as it moves toward the future and a possible merger with the Paige Memorial Library, including seven computer workstations, four printers, a refrigerator, a new phone system, and money to purchase magazines. There is also a need for time and talent in the form of lock-picking the door of a cabinet which houses historic books, painting the exterior window trim and refinishing the front doors and the conference room table.

Grunberg said the library could also benefit from having its interior brightened,

and the building grounds have room for gardens.

The library is also selling T-shirts featuring its new mascot and slogan. Proceeds from the sale of the T-shirts benefit the library.

Grunberg read a passage from the library's original dedication speech given by speaker Henry K. Hyde that described the library as "not only a worthy gift, but an enduring one."

"So let's endure," Grunberg said.

About the library

The Gilbertville Public Library, 259 Main St., Gilbertville, is open Tuesday and Wednesday from noon-4 p.m., and Thursday and Friday from 3-7 p.m.

BUDGET from page 1

There was a mentioning of fees from special permit and site plan review applications. A percentage from building permits do not go towards the Planning Board but goes into town revenue.

The Building Inspector will be attending the next regular Select Board meeting to address the increase of some fees. As for addressing deposits and expenditures, Cole wants to speak with the Town Accountant about the proper paths to follow to address the perimeters of the revolving fund.

The next item discussed is the Town House. This item is level funded from the previous year and also has a revolving account. Funds are typically used for janitorial services for the Town House and rental fees are collected from those who rent the space.

The Building Inspector is level funded due to a contract. The board members know there was a different agreement in place last year. The Electrical Inspector's and the Emergency

Management Director's salaries were also addressed.

For a moment, Korzec explained to the Select Board that "cutting would not be wise" when addressing certain items on the budget.

Back to emergency management, one big expense is Code Red, an emergency alert system. The town pays for a subscription, and a portion is paid by New Braintree.

A separate meeting will be held to cover the Highway Department budget with the superintendent.

Cemetery has a revolving account with \$12,000 in it. The current limit is \$5,000 and the Cemetery Commission already came forward to the Select Board for an approval to increase the limit to \$11,500. The Finance Committee also approved the increase.

The Board of Health also has a revolving account, from which the BOH Agent is being paid. The monitoring expense has gone up due to checking wells for PFAS.

The Animal Inspector Salary is level funded. The Animal Control Officer has

requested an increase, but the inspector hasn't.

For the agreement with the Senior Center, a meeting will be held later in the week on Thursday. The Council on Aging nutrition contract is still unknown.

Both boards talked about the Paige Memorial Library and the Gilbertville Public Library, starting with the roles of the libraries. There is a 2% increase for the Director and the Assistant. The expense increase is based of CW Mars and their certifications.

It was shared by Caggiano that the Library Board of Trustees have asked for a \$30,000 increase over what is currently in the budget. They're anticipating the purchase of the Gilbertville library. The town still hasn't decided yet if that is what they're going to do. The board is still in the effect finding stages.

"This is something the trustees are looking at right now," Korzec said.

Korzec believes the trustees will most likely talk about this with the Select Board and possibly

be brought up at the Annual Town Meeting.

After attending a trustees meeting Caggiano knows they don't have enough information at this point. The Paige Trustees are looking to see if there is anything in the title that says it must be a library in perpetuity.

Korzec would then go over the costs to benefits. The average cost per pension is roughly \$17,000 per employee. Health insurance also pays out in benefits, depending on what plans they have. Benefits could be higher depending on the salary, and the health plans employees have.

Caggiano shared that it's important to know, "anyone in Massachusetts, anyone working 20 hours or more, qualifies for benefits."

Debt

The Select Board and the Finance Committee would then approach debt. Korzec suggested they start by going over principals and interests.

Caggiano brought up two old loans, one from 2014 and the other from 2015. One is a wastewater loan and the other is from the purchase of the police building.

Caggiano provided copies of a five-year plan with combined interests and principal over the next five years to help pay off these old loans.

"Old debt, new loan," as she worded it.

For the wastewater loan, the town owes approximately \$117,440. The loan for the police land, the town owes \$124,990. The principals and interest are broken down on the sheets provided by

Caggiano.

For the firetruck, the loan comes to maturity in September. A schedule was mapped out to where the town pays interest the first two years and hits principal in year three. The town could pay sooner to try to pay off the debt earlier.

Korzec believes to not pay principal early could have a negative impact.

With bringing everything forward to the budget, the board and committee feel confident on making the most informed decisions. The next joint meeting between Select Board and Finance will be on Monday, April 6 at 6 p.m. and will go over Highway and Fire department budgets for FY 27.

DA'S OFFICE

from page 12

records.

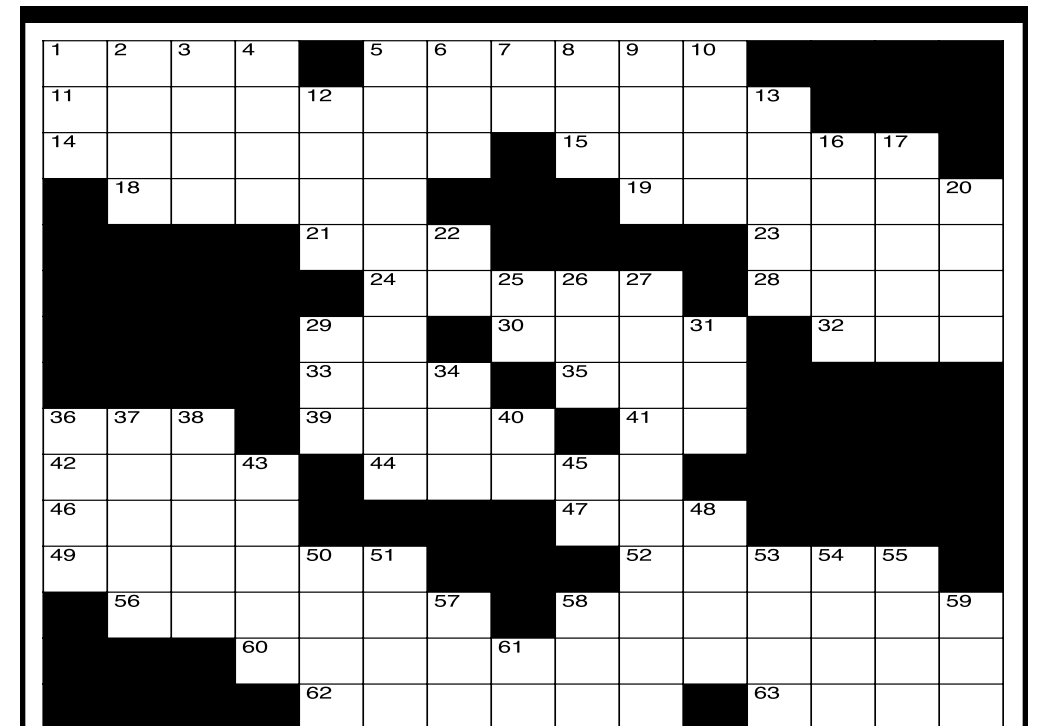
The remaining 21 police officers referenced in the Brady letters no longer work in law enforcement in the Northwestern District. This means they have either retired, resigned, been terminated, been decertified by

POST, or are currently working as police officers outside of the Northwestern District.

It is important to note that at any given time there are more than 500 police officers working in the Northwestern District, which covers Hampshire and Franklin Counties and the Town of Athol.

"The NWDAO values our

law enforcement partners and remains committed to maintaining strong, professional relationships that uphold the highest legal standards and ensure fairness in our courts," said District Attorney David Sullivan. "Our Brady review process reflects that responsibility, and we are committed to complying with the public records law."



CLUES ACROSS

1. Absence of difficulty
5. Preserve a dead body
11. Gratitude
14. The act of coming together again
15. More cushy
18. Visionaries
19. Large fish-eating bird
21. Indicates near
23. Former CIA and CIA critic
24. Icelandic poems
28. Pop
29. Hammer is one
30. Self
32. Thyroid-stimulating hormone
33. Nowhere to be found
35. Electronic data processing
36. Drivers' licenses and passports are two
39. Snake-like fishes
41. Air Force
42. Popular personal computers
44. Stages in ecological succession
46. Wings
47. In the center
49. Pleasantly smooth
52. Jeweled headdress
56. In slow tempo
58. ___ Falls
60. Reiterations
62. Eras
63. Hyphen

CLUES DOWN

1. Body part
2. Mimics
3. Expel or eject (variant sp.)
4. Sea eagle
5. Taxonomic category
6. Chinese languages
7. Mr. T's "A-Team" character
8. Consumed
9. Chinese dynasty
10. NFL legend Randy
12. Ireland
13. Palm trees with creeping roots
16. Fungal disease
17. Tall, slender-leaved plants
20. Affirmative! (slang)
22. It says who you are
25. Atlantic coast state
26. Grow older
27. Associations
29. Woman (French)
31. Sunscreen rating
34. Brew
36. Leader
37. Indigo bush genus
38. Burn with a hot liquid
40. Junior's father
43. Mackerel genus
45. Morning
48. Straight line from side to side (abbr.)
50. Type of molding
51. Small, thin or twisted bunch
53. Worn by exposure to the weather
54. Mars crater
55. Humanities
57. Relating to the ears
58. "To the ___ degree"
59. Residue when something is burned
61. It cools a home

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Do you want a career supporting local journalism, which tells the unique stories of our communities?

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Email: jamie@turley.com

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HELP WANTED

The Town of North Brookfield is looking for a **part-time Program Assistant** for the Council on Aging. Please submit a resume with a letter of interest to the **Selectmen's Office, 215 Main St., North Brookfield, MA 01535**; or by email to selectmen@northbrookfield.net.

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

ALL REAL ESTATE advertised herein is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitation, or discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin, or intention to make any such preference, limitation, or discrimination." We will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate which is in violation of the law. All persons are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised are available on an equal opportunity basis.

LAND WANTED

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FOR RENT

All real estate advertising in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise any preference, limitation or discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status (number of children and or pregnancy), national origin, ancestry, age, marital status, or any intention to make any such preference, limitation or discrimination.
This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate that is in violation of the law. Our readers are hereby informed that all dwellings advertised in this newspaper are available on an equal opportunity basis. To complain about discrimination call The Department of Housing and Urban Development "HUD" toll-free at 1-800-669-9777. For the N.E. area, call HUD at 617-565-5308. The toll free number for the hearing impaired is 1-800-927-9275.

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GARDEN from page 1

Honor Society and Quabbin Regional High School's NJROTC.

"We are here to raise money for the community garden," Ware Grange's John Carter said.

Carter explained the history of the Grange, and how the organization became involved with the effort to build a community garden on the grounds of Trinity Episcopal Church's Jubilee Ministries at 80 Pleasant St.

"We work to support agriculture," he said. "This is what the Grange does...we're here to support the community and help people who are interested in becoming a farmer and starting their own gardens."

Carter said the Ware Grange secured a grant that will also be used to support the Ware Community Garden.

The Ware Grange is also hosting a series of gardening workshops for adults and children. The first adult workshop will be led by Turley Publication's "In the Garden" columnist and expert grower, Roberta McQuaid on May 1 at 7 p.m. The first in the Kids' Corner Workshops with Jen McNally will be held on May 9 at 10 a.m.

More information about Ware Grange and its programs are available at www.waregrange.org and on their Facebook page. People can also email waregrange164@gmail.com.

The Ware Community Garden was developed by a task force of Quaboag Valley Food Policy Council members, under the umbrella of Healthy Quaboag.

Healthy Quaboag's pri-

mary objective is to address health disparities and enhance the well-being of the region's residents, striving to improve the overall health of the community by implementing impactful prevention strategies and health initiatives.

A recent Community Food Access Assessment showed a great need for accessible and affordable spaces for residents to garden, and the task force got to work to partner with the town of Ware, Trinity Episcopal Church, the Ware Grange, and several other organizations and businesses, including the East Quabbin Land Trust, Workshop13 and the Hardwick Farmers Co-Op. These key partnerships have secured enough space to provide 10 foot by 10 foot gardening plots that will be available to residents on a first come, first serve basis.

Sawyer Blake, Project Coordinator for Community Health at Healthy Quaboag, thanked the Ware Grange and the Ware Senior Center for hosting the fundraiser supper, and for supporting the community garden.

"This event truly means so much to me," Blake said.

Blake explained the role of Healthy Quaboag, and the food policy council.

"The food policy council is a subsection of Healthy Quaboag," they said. "It is a group of people who want to make healthy food sustainable."

Blake said creating a community garden was a "top priority" for the council's members.

Not only will the community garden be a space for residents to grow food, but



Members of Ware Jr./Sr. High School's National Honor Society and Quabbin Regional High School's NJROTC were the servers for the supper.

Turley Publications Photos by Paula Quimette



John Carter of Ware Grange #164 spoke about the role of the Grange and its support of agriculture.



State Sen. Peter Durant attended the supper and spoke in support of the community garden.

it will also be a space where they can connect with others.

Blake said one major goal is to make the community garden affordable to everyone, and fundraisers such as that evening's supper and raffle, helped to do that.

Blake said the community

garden is expected to open at the beginning of June, and they encouraged anyone interested in getting involved or securing a plot, to reach out by emailing sblake@townofware.com or calling 413-807-0901.

About QVFPC

The Quaboag Valley Food Policy Council is overseen by Healthy Quaboag, and is funded through a grant received by the Town of Ware in partnership with Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation, covering the towns of Ware, Belchertown, Palmer, Monson, Wales, Holland, Brimfield, Warren, Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield and East Brookfield.

The council is open to all, and everyone is welcome to join in the discussion.

The full results of the Community Food Access Assessment are available online. To view the comprehensive report and learn more about the findings, visit healthyquaboag.org/food-policycouncil.

Death notice

Elizabeth E. Boudreau, 82

MONSON – Elizabeth Ellen Boudreau passed away March 24, 2026 at the age of 82. Visitation will be held on Monday, April 6, 2026 from 10 a.m.-noon at the Beers & Story Palmer Funeral Home. Burial will immediately follow in Oak Knoll Cemetery.

Applications available for Michael H. Deslauriers Scholarship

WARE – Applications for the Michael H. Deslauriers Scholarship are now available at your high school's guidance office.

The committee will award the Michael H. Deslauriers Scholarship to a graduating senior residing in the town of Ware, regardless of the school district they attend.

To apply for this scholarship, a copy of your school transcript and a completed application, which is available at your school's guidance office, must be submitted by May 1.

Please mail to Ware AMVETS Post 2577, c/o Richard Rucki, 8 First Avenue, Ware, MA 01082.

public notices

Ware Conservation Commission Notice of Public Hearing

The Ware Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Wednesday, April 8, 2026, at 6:30 PM** pursuant to the Wetlands Protection Act, M.G.L. 131 c.40. The hearing will include consideration of a (RDA) by Andrew Bonilla for the construction of two wooden exercise stations within the Buffer Zone of nearby wetlands at Grenville Park, 73 Church Street, Ware. Said hearing will be held in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Town Hall, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA 01082. To view application and related plans, contact the Conservation office at 413.967.9648. Pursuant to MGL Chapter 4, Section 13, a copy of this legal notice can also be found on the Massachusetts Newspaper Publishers Association's (MNPA) website: <http://masspublicnotices.org>. 04/02/2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE BOARD OF HEALTH TOWN OF WARREN MASSACHUSETTS

The Town of Warren Board of Health will hold a public hearing in person on **Wednesday, April 29th, 2026, 3 PM** located at **2252 Main St. West Warren MA 01092** to consider the adoption of the following regulations pursuant to its authority under M.G.L. c.111, s.31:

Body Art Regulations – to regulate the permitting and operation of body art establishments, including tattooing, piercing, and related practices, and to establish health and safety standards for

such operations.

Copies of the proposed regulations are available for public review at the Board of Health Office, 48 High St. Warren MA 01083, during regular business hours Monday – Wednesday 8:30-4pm, and may also be accessed at <https://www.warren-ma.gov>

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on the proposed regulations should appear at the time and place designated above or submit written comments prior to the hearing to: Jessica Clarke, Board of Health Administrator, PO Box 478, Warren MA 01083 or boh@warren-ma.gov

The Board of Health reserves the right to amend or revise the proposed regulations as a result of comments received at the hearing. Daniel Thibodeau, Chair Board of Health Town of Warren 04/02, 04/09/2026

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT Docket No. 26 SM 000895 ORDER OF NOTICE

TO: **Kimberly M. Lacroix** and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):

MCLP Asset Company, Inc., claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in **Ware, numbered 286 Os-**

borne Road, given by **Michael J. Lacroix and Kimberly M. Lacroix to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Merrimack Mortgage Company, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated February 11, 2014, and recorded in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds in Book 11583, Page 212**, and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.

If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before **05/04/2026** or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.

Witness, **GORDON H. PIPER** Chief Justice of this Court on 3/17/2026.

Attest: **Deborah J. Patterson,** Recorder 04/02/2026

Town of Hardwick PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Under the provisions of the General Laws of Massachusetts, Chapter 166, and any additions or amendments thereto; please be advised that at their meeting on

Monday, April 13, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., at the Municipal Office Building, 307 Main Street, Gilbertville, MA 01031, the Hardwick Select Board will consider a request to give permission to Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc, to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way:

Pine Street- National Grid to install 1 JO pole beginning at a point approximately 28 feet west of the centerline of the intersection of School Street. 04/02/2026

STORAGE AUCTION

The contents of Daniel Fournier will be auctioned off at Secure Storage, 31 Southbridge Rd., Warren, MA on **4/18/26 at 9:00 a.m.**

The contents of Jose Sanchez, Jessalyn Hughes, Amanda Harris and Zachary Freeman will be auctioned off at Secure Storage, 167 West St., Ware, MA on **4/18/26 at 9:45 a.m.**

Any questions or inquiries call 413-800-6278. 04/02, 04/09/2026

Notice of Public Hearing Planning Board LEGAL NOTICE SP-2026-02

NOTICE is hereby given that the Ware Planning Board, acting as the Special Permit Granting and Site Plan Review Authority, will hold a Public Hearing during the scheduled meeting on **THURSDAY, April 16th, 2026**

at **7:00pm**, on the application of Daniel Strum, for a common driveway, under Zoning Bylaw Section 6.6.2, and pursuant to MGL Chapter 40A. Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, this hearing will be conducted in person and via remote means, in accordance with applicable law. This means that members of the Planning Board as well as members of the public may access this meeting in person, or via virtual means. In person attendance will be held in the Board of Selectman's Meeting Room, 126 Main Street, Ware, MA. It is possible that any or all members of the public body may attend remotely, with in-person attendance consisting of members of public. The meeting may be accessed remotely via zoom. Go to <https://zoom.us/join> or join by phone. Phone Number: 929-205-6099; Meeting ID: 784 604 1861; Password: 01082.

SITE LOCATION: Corner of West Main Street & Gould Rd. Said premises being further described in deeds recorded in the Hampshire County Registry of Deeds, Book 13647 Page 246. Properties are also identified as Assessor's Parcels 55-54-2 & 55-54-3. Zoned: Suburban Residential (SR).

A complete copy of the application can be found at the Town Clerk's office and on the Planning & Community Development Department website under Recent Filings. Anyone interested or wishing to be heard on the application should appear at the time and place designated.

WARE PLANNING BOARD 04/02, 04/09/2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE BOARD OF HEALTH TOWN OF WARREN MASSACHUSETTS

The Town of Warren Board of Health will hold a public hearing in person on **Wednesday April 29th, 2026, 3 PM** located at **2252 Main St. West Warren MA 01092** to consider the adoption of the following regulations pursuant to its authority under M.G.L. c.111, s.31:

Well Regulations – to regulate the construction, location, use, maintenance, and decommissioning of private wells within the Town of Warren for the protection of public health and safety.

Copies of the proposed regulations are available for public review at the Board of Health Office, 48 High St. Warren MA 01083, during regular business hours Monday–Wednesday 8:30-4pm, and may also be accessed at <https://www.warren-ma.gov>

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on the proposed regulations should appear at the time and place designated above or submit written comments prior to the hearing to: Jessica Clarke, Board of Health Administrator, PO Box 478, Warren MA 01083 or boh@warren-ma.gov

The Board of Health reserves the right to amend or revise the proposed regulations as a result of comments received at the hearing.

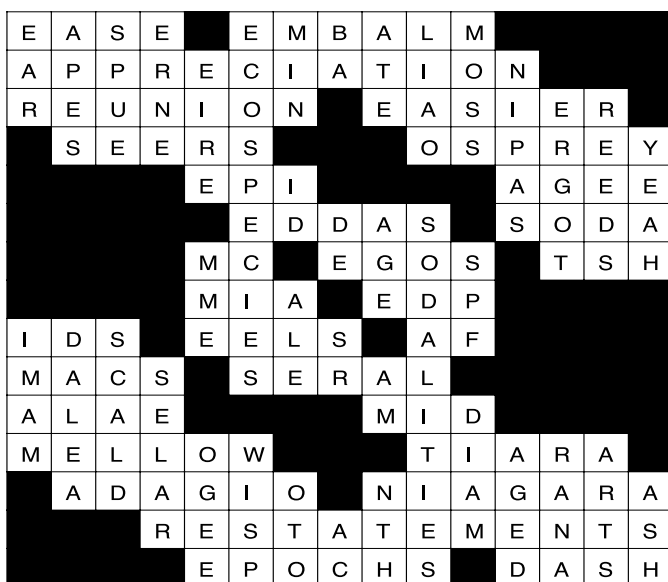
Daniel Thibodeau, Chair Board of Health Town of Warren 04/02, 04/09/2026

Ware River News
OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries. One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.



PUBLIC NOTICES ARE NOW ONLINE

- 1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com
- 2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.
- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

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